

OUR SOVEREIGN LADY

QUEEN VICTORIA

HER LIFE AND JUBILEE.

BY

THOMAS ARCHER, F.R.H.S.

AUTHOR OF "FIFTY YEARS OF SOCIAL AND POLITICAL PROGRESS;" "THE WAR IN EGYPT AND THE SOUDAN," ETC.

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PREFACE

The scope and intention of this book were so fully set forth in the prospectus, that there would seem to be little occasion for a preface, except for the purpose of submitting to the reader that the indications given at the commencement have been fulfilled with the completion of the work.

Its design was to commemorate the completion of the Jubilee of her Majesty's beneficent reign, by faithfully recording the story of her life;—not alone that aspect of it in which the crown, the orb, and the sceptre are most significant, but chiefly the social, the domestic, the gentle life which has been an example that all might appreciate—the life of our Sovereign Lady enthroned in the will and affection of her people, with whom she has ever been in sympathy.

There was no proposal to include in these pages an account of the history of the past fifty years; but it would have been impossible to leave unnoticed the many important events and significant occurrences—turning points of our national experience—in which the Queen and the Royal Family have taken a direct and personal part.

The end which has been kept in view was to give such events their due proportion in illustrating the ability and the

happy characteristics for which her Majesty has always been distinguished. The more immediate intention of the narrative is to present a biographical and not an historical record; the story of a Sovereign who has lived in the daylight of public honour and regard, who has had no secrets from her people, but has, with gracious simplicity, admitted them to share her joys, her sorrows, and those domestic intimacies and avocations of which she has herself written in the confidence which comes of her own unbroken sympathy with the troubles, the efforts, and the aspirations of her subjects.

A few early pages of this work contain a brief account of the remarkable events by which her Majesty came to the throne, and that slight record includes some references to the public and court life of the period, which are significant of salutary changes largely referable to the Queen's personal character and influence. A few of the later pages are chiefly devoted to recording some particulars of the public rejoicings and memorials by which the Jubilee of the reign of our beloved Sovereign has been happily celebrated. This, it is believed, will also have a definite significance in a work designed to be a faithful chronicle, wherein it is hoped some reflections of the gracious presence of our Sovereign Lady may be discerned.

THOMAS ARCHER.

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ON the morning of the twenty-fourth of May, in the year eighteen hundred and nineteen, an event, destined to be a blessing to this country and to the great colonies and dependencies included in the British Empire, was made known in the brief announcement:—"At a quarter past four o'clock this morning, at Kensington Palace, Her Royal Highness the Duchess of Kent, of a daughter."

There were neither electric telegraphs to flash the message to remote regions of the world, nor railways to carry it swiftly to distant provincial towns and villages in the United Kingdom; but as quickly as the news spread, it awakened deep interest among thoughtful people not only in England but on the Continent of Europe. There appeared to be little immediate probability of the infant princess succeeding to the throne, but peculiar circumstances had placed the royal authority in the hands of the Prince Regent, who was fifty-seven years old. His

daughter the Princess Charlotte had died two years before, and as only the Duke of York and the Duke of Cumberland had been married previous to that event and were still childless, the announcement from Kensington Palace gave to the nation an impression, which soon became a lively hope, that the infant daughter of the Duke of Kent might become Queen.

An impartial retrospect of the history of social and political progress in England during the past fifty years will show how great has been the influence exercised,—at first perhaps almost unconsciously,—but always honestly and directly,—by a sovereign who in her earliest days won the hearts of the people by the happy characteristics of fearlessness, simplicity, and truthfulness, no less than by a personal charm which was altogether different and superior to the artificial mannerism of mere etiquette. The early training and the native disposition of the Princess Victoria had made it impossible to her to endure the sickening atmosphere of court intrigue, and she appeared to a multitude of loyal souls as a gracious, pure, and childlike presence, coming forth unsullied by old evil traditions, low aims, and narrow selfish interests; to represent from the throne a genuine sympathy with the higher aspirations and brighter hopes which had begun to stir even the masses of the people.

Considering the period of turbulent political demonstration that had preceded and followed the passing of the Reform Bill, and the rumbling of the storm which wrought such changes in France and Belgium, it may well be believed that by the accession of the young princess, and the sentiments of loyalty evoked by her youth and the frank confidence with which she trusted her subjects—serious social and political dangers were averted. It is quite certain that the pure—womanly, sincere, and affectionate nature of the Queen had the effect of at once

promoting all legislation and all social movements designed to strengthen family ties and enhance the sweetness and dignity of domestic life; and, at the same time, the sentiments with which the sovereign continued to be regarded, were immediately associated with the best endeavours to attain to a higher standard of national morality, to improve the condition of the poorest, to promote social purity, and to advance the claims of mental and physical education.

In a word, it was universally understood and taken to the heart of the people that (to use the common phrase) the "bringing up" of the youthful sovereign had been that of a healthy English child—untainted by heartless ceremonial observances, and though subjected to rather more than usual responsibility in pursuing those studies which made her one of the most accomplished girls to be found even amidst the cultured aristocracy, enjoying the freedom and docile independence that comes of wise maternal influence and companionship.

The suite of rooms in Kensington Palace was a home which, though often dull, and always secluded, as the home of a widow and a fatherless child must too frequently seem to be, was the abode of loving care and assiduous attention. The mother, even in the first hour of her bereavement, had chosen to devote herself to the nurture of the infant before whom lay the probability of having to fulfil a great destiny at a time when the relations between the sovereign and the people would undergo a marked and significant change.

The public interest which was still manifested in the palace at Kensington was almost entirely associated with the knowledge that the Duchess of Kent and her infant daughter dwelt there. The queer composite building, distinguished neither by antiquity nor by architectural beauty, would, but for its being

the birth-place of her Majesty, … eally historical importance, for though the courts of … and Mary, of Anne and of the two first Georges were held here, its history scarcely takes us further back than

> "The tea-cup days of hoop and hood,
> And when the patch was worn."

It is desirable, however, in the interests of those among us who may not have a clear apprehension of the relationships which governed the accession of Queen Victoria to the throne by direct succession, to make a brief retrospective reference to the former courts and royal occupants of Kensington Palace, and this will enable us also to appreciate more distinctly the remarkable contrast presented by the court and reign of our Queen.

Speaking of Kensington Palace itself, it may be remarked, as Leigh Hunt says, that "it possesses a Dutch solidity; it can be imagined full of English comfort; it is quiet; in a good air, and though it is a palace, no tragical history is connected with it;—all which considerations give it a sort of homely fireside character, which seems to represent the domestic side of royalty itself, and thus renders an interesting service to what is not always so well recommended by cost and splendour. Windsor Castle is a place to receive monarchs in, Buckingham Palace to see fashion in, Kensington Palace seems a place to drink tea in. . . . The reigns that flourished here, appositely enough to the nature of the building, were all tea-drinking reigns."

There had previously been royal residences, as well as those of the nobility and gentry, in Kensington, for the whole district was delightfully open and distinguished for the purity of the air; but there had been no palace till William the Third bought the mansion of Daniel Finch, second Earl of Nottingham and son

of the first earl, Hetl. Fi. .ch, the famous Lord Chancellor, who had risen to . fice after having been Solicitor-general at the restorat... of Charles the Second.

The garden belonging to the house included fifteen acres, a pleasant and ample breathing space even for a hard-worked official of such distinction; but Sir Heneage, who, though above reproach, prudently took care of himself, increased it by a grant from the adjoining land of Hyde Park. These gardens consisted principally of the ground squaring with the south side of the building; laid out in the formal and rather dreary style which existed in England before Charles the Second had invited Le Notre, the famous French gardener, to come to England and make a new fashion in some of the royal parterres. Clipped yew-trees and other sombre accessories were also in accordance with the fashion when the ground was first laid out, and some of these features remained till quite recently.

William, having designed to live at Kensington, and there to hold such court as suited his reserved and somewhat repellent temper, converted the country-seat of the Finches into a palace, not so much by architectural improvement as by making it the nucleus for a more extensive building; for which purpose he added to the lower portion an upper story designed by Wren, who also designed the Orangery, an accessory which was perhaps the most attractive feature of the palace.

Queen Anne, when she succeeded to the throne and to Kensington Palace, added about thirty acres to the gardens, which, it would appear, did not previously to 1705 extend further to the north than the conservatory, a narrow building then used for its original purpose of a banqueting-house. The palace itself was little altered, and was even at that time regarded as having no great claim to admiration; but the famous gardeners, Wise and

Loudon, carried out the picturesque improvements, and Addison in the *Spectator* says, "If as a critic I may single out any passage of their work to commend, I shall take notice of that part in the upper garden of Kensington, which was at first nothing but a gravel pit."

George the First succeeded to both palace and gardens, but he cared little about either, or about England for that matter, in comparison with his native Herrenhausen and his own countrymen. He could not speak English; he had left his queen, Sophia Dorothea of Zell, in Germany, imprisoned for life on an accusation never really proved to be true, so far as history has made known; and he was on no good terms with his son the heir to the throne. The government here was in the hands of Sir Robert Walpole, and the king seldom appeared abroad, even in the comparative seclusion of Kensington Gardens, where, however, persons of fashion who obtained admission had begun to meet and promenade, on certain days, to see and be seen. Caroline of Anspach, the consort of the Prince of Wales, of course attended the court with her maids of honour, and as the gardens were at first open to a few favoured visitors, and afterwards to a considerable number of persons who had claims to gentility, the promenades became famous. Caroline was a handsome or at all events an attractive looking princess, and though the king used to express dislike to her, presumably because she was the wife of his son (whom he disliked still more), and used to speak of her as "Cette diablesse, Madame la Princesse," there can be little doubt that she did much to popularize not only the promenade and the assembly at Kensington, but the dull and splenetic King also.

At anyrate, when her husband came to the throne, Caroline of Anspach obtained the respect and even the admiration of

those who knew her best, and though her assumption of a kind of encyclopædic knowledge, or of the love of it, gave a curious air to the court at Kensington, she succeeded in making the palace and the gardens the resort of a great number of distinguished as well as of undistinguished people, and contrived to let her conceited, narrow-minded, and tyrannical little husband imagine that he had by far the largest share in attracting attention, even though the royal train was composed of famous wits and beauties, who, whether their claims to eulogium were well founded or not, are celebrated by name in the published poems or letters of Pope, Gray, and other writers of immortal verse or polite and amusing letters.

To Caroline, Queen of George the Second, is due the inclusion—perhaps the preservation as a fine open space—of the present Kensington Gardens, for which she obtained about three hundred additional acres, and practically commenced that free admission of visitors and promenaders which has resulted in this now delightful resort becoming a public haunt, where innumerable Londoners go to "breathe in sunshine and see azure skies,"—amidst the pure air of verdant open spaces, the shade of pleasant groves, and beds, plantations, and borders, where the best old characteristics of the gardens are preserved in numerous trees and shrubs which are still marked by labels showing their botanical designation, and in the beautiful flowering trees that make the north walk so delightful by their spring bloom or summer burgeon.

The gardens are now so thickly wooded that the only large open space is that in which the "round pond" is situated, and the vista which leads from that spot to the park. The "Serpentine River," as it is called, was also formed under the scheme of improvements ordered by Queen Caroline—a series of ponds

being so connected as to unite them in one sheet of water, which instead of being straight like a Dutch canal was irregular in its course.

Though William of Orange made a palace of the house at Kensington, it can scarcely be said that he formed a court there as a court was understood by the previous frequenters of Whitehall. There was little society, though there were many important councils. Not well used to the manners or the language adopted by the nobility of France or of England, he was characterized by a bluntness of speech and a reserved and saturnine demeanour, which, to the superficial observer, appeared to indicate a cold and unfeeling heart, though it is evident that beneath that impassive manner and expression there existed the capacity for sincere regard and intense feeling, as may be proved by the long and unbroken affection which, in his own undemonstrative way, he manifested for his sincere friend Bentinck, the companion who, with quiet and unselfish solicitude, had served him so faithfully and so well. But the plots and snares that had encompassed his youth had made William wary and reticent; the peculiar circumstances under which he came to the throne, and the rivalry of parties which he had to encounter, increased his caution, and there were few in whom he could confide. At the council of war or of state he was congenially employed, and still more so in forming plans for attaining the ends to which he devoted himself—a strong confederation for the purpose of resisting and ultimately breaking the power of France. He cared little or nothing for dramatic performances such as were then common; and during a youth, one might almost say a childhood, absorbed in the study of state affairs he had acquired neither the knowledge of nor the taste for poetry and general literature. Science was of little interest to him, except as far as it related

to politics or to the improvement of the art of war; but he had acquired sufficient knowledge to speak and write in Latin, Spanish, French, Italian, and German, and he was acquainted with English as well as with Dutch, so that he was under no such disadvantages as those that beset the Hanoverian successor to Queen Anne.

The delight of the small, frail, "asthmatic skeleton," as Macaulay has called him, was in action. Neither stage-plays, court concerts, cards, dice, assemblies, nor the small observances of society had any charm for him. He had little leisure for amusements, and his chief recreation was hunting, which he followed with a violent and almost reckless ardour.

But little as William loved England, and few as his sympathies were for the English ways and people, he always made his own pleasure and ease, and even his supposed prejudices, completely subservient to the duties he had undertaken. He visited Hampton Court once a week, on Saturdays, and made his home at Kensington; and though his domestic and even his moral character was not a type of perfection, it cannot be doubted that the presence of his devoted and amiable Mary—Queen in name though she yielded all authority to her husband—made Kensington Palace more attractive than even the old house at the Hague would have been without her. It was at Kensington, when she died, that he was carried from her bedside fainting and overwhelmed with grief. It was to Kensington that he was carried after the accident that threw him from his horse while he was riding at Hampton Court, and occasioned the injury which hastened his death and left the succession to Anne.[1]

[1] According to the generally received story the King was riding at his usual gallop when the horse stumbled on a mole-hill and the rider was thrown to the ground, breaking his collar-bone. The Jacobites used afterwards to drink "to the little gentleman in black," meaning the mole which had caused the King's death.

In her reign Kensington Palace was no more lively than it had been in the time of her predecessors; the Queen was dull, her husband was duller, and probably as a consequence the company was dullest, though several of the letters and annals of the time indicate some "high jinks at Saint James'" amongst the court ladies and gentlemen. In fact there was often little company to speak of except on particular occasions, for the Queen was "wrapped up" in Sarah Jennings—Duchess of Marlborough, a passionate friendship for whom had begun at an earlier date, and but for the intrigues of political parties and the insatiable greed and ambition of the favourite herself, might have continued till Anne's death. We all know how the difference of rank was abolished between them in the confidential sense of equality insisted on by the Queen. How, as Mrs. Morley and Mrs. Freeman, they lived as two idle and rather self-indulgent gossips—impatient of the ceremonial occasionally to be observed before strangers—until the companion and confederate became a dictatorial tyrant, and Anne suffered under the constant domination of her unscrupulous termagant, and the political opponents of Marlborough induced her to abandon her former dearest friend and to adopt Mrs. Abigail Hill as her confidante, with the new appellation of Mrs. Masham.

Kensington Palace, dull as it was, must have been the very centre of intrigue at that time—a time, however, which has been called the Augustan age of literature. We can indeed scarcely refer to Kensington Palace and the court of Anne, without thinking of Pope, Addison, Swift, Steele, Prior, and the galaxy of dramatists, wits, poets, and philosophers, in whose writings political allusions, descriptions of society, and satires upon the court and the fashions are to be found.

There is no need to dwell upon the domestic life of Queen

Anne at the palace at Kensington. Her husband, who was too insignificant even to raise the ire of James the Second at his desertion, was neither ambitious to take any prominent part in public affairs nor capable of doing so if he had been permitted to assert himself.

In a reign during which the union with Scotland was effected, and the power and prestige of England was restored by the victories gained by the army of the Duke of Marlborough and his generals, the court was perhaps the "dowdiest" in Europe. The Queen had been on no good terms either with her sister Mary or with William of Orange, though her determination to support the Protestant succession—and, therefore, her own claims—had caused her to desert her father, who had not scrupled to desert her, and by her presence she had encouraged a meeting of the adherents of the Prince of Orange. During his reign, however, she had been tolerated rather than cherished, and, having married the kind of man who would do little to discourage her own indolent disposition, she fell into that kind of easy, self-indulgent way of living which is commonly called "coddling," a tendency which was obvious enough in Mary, but in Anne's case had been fostered by her having remained in retirement at Campden House in Kensington, with the permission to spend a month or two of the year at Windsor. It should be remembered, too, that she had a very large family of children, none of whom survived the days of early infancy except one, the unhappy little Duke of Gloucester, who died at the age of eleven, two years before his mother came to the throne—died, it was alleged, of the arduous studies set him by Bishop Burnet, appointed as the child's tutor and governor by the order of William, who, of course, recognized the boy as heir to the crown. It is on record that the little fellow had command of a regiment of boy soldiers, who

wore a special uniform, and with their band used to parade before him as he sat on his pony in full regimentals of a general or colonel, and that they would occasionally have a field-day on Wormwood Scrubs or a review in Kensington Gardens, where William the Third would himself be present to see how the mannikin commander managed his Lilliputian force.[1] But the little prince was already suffering from water on the brain, though neither his parents nor others seemed to be aware of the cause of his lethargy and physical feebleness. It is even said that he was cruelly punished for ill-temper, laziness, and obstinacy, while his apparent sullenness and indisposition to exertion were the results of the disease of which he died.

It is not to be wondered at, perhaps, that the new régime in Kensington Palace did not promise much court gaiety. The husband of the Queen was a cipher, not devoid of a certain undemonstrative regard, but caring little for anything that disturbed his enjoyment of a good dinner, and with neither taste nor talent for literature or art. There can be little doubt that he exercised his dull persistent influence to aid the Duke and Duchess of Marlborough in neutralizing any practical expression of a sentiment which had arisen in the mind of the Queen in favour of forgiving the injuries she had formerly believed she had suffered by the marriage of her father with Mary of Modena, and the birth of the son who was now known as the "Pretender." With a weak but kindly and generous nature she had repented of the complaints and invectives that she had so often indulged in against Mr. and Mrs. Mansel, as she called her father and his wife when writing to her sister Mary, and her penitence seemed likely to take the form of acknowledging her half-brother as her

[1] The late Emperor Napoleon III. caused a regiment of boy soldiers to be drilled and placed with their juvenile officers under the command of his son, the late "Prince Imperial," at a very early age.

successor. This disposition was seized upon by the adherents of James and by the more violent opponents of the influence of Marlborough and the Whigs, and the result was continual plotting to bring the prince to England, and mutual vehement denunciations between the two parties, in which the clergy of the English Church took a prominent part. It was to the clergy that Anne in a great measure owed the title of "Good Queen Anne," for she consistently supported the Church not by empty patronage but by relinquishing the "first fruits" and "tenths" of ecclesiastical benefices to augment the small livings, so that "Queen Anne's Bounty" represented substantial relief to many who were in need. The Queen was not wanting in dignity of manner, combined with an attractive presence and a kindly pleasant aspect which made her popular, but her nature was generous and confiding—qualities which her weakness of purpose allowed self-seeking statesmen to turn to their own advantage. The whole atmosphere of the court at Kensington was that of political intrigue, and public opinion was in a tumult of divided interests, in which fierce animosity was stimulated by songs, caricatures, satires, and pasquinades which the rival factions printed and distributed broadcast.

The reign of Queen Anne has been called "glorious" because of the victories gained in the long wars, of which the nation at last grew tired; and doubtless the advances made in literature and the drama contributed to make it appear like the commencement of a new era. There were Tory and Whig writers, wits, panegyrists, and satirists, and many of them were to be seen at the levées or receptions at Kensington Palace; but Anne herself was often too depressed or too indolent to hold a brilliant court, and though she demanded the observance of strict etiquette on such occasions, she was apparently relieved

when, after a reception, she could get away from her ceremonious visitors and go to dinner, and to the card-tables which were set out for the evening.

There was no startling breach of morality, no coarse or disagreeable diversion in the court circle, but it was often almost insufferably dismal, and no wonder, for the poor Queen had no children, her health was failing, her former intimate associate had been dismissed in disgrace when the Tory influence triumphed, and Marlborough and his duchess had been abandoned. She had outlived her husband, her increasing bulk and her infirmities prevented her from taking her former exercise of following the hounds and the stag in a light carriage built on purpose that she might "hunt" at Windsor, and she was now wheeled about the gardens at Kensington in a chair. She suffered from what appear to have been epileptic fits, and while she lay dying after the last of these seizures, the Jacobite party in power had nearly succeeded in proclaiming the Pretender; but their plans were frustrated by the Dukes of Argyle and Somerset, who presented themselves at the council sitting at Kensington Palace, while Argyle's regiment was marched from Westminster to take the place of the soldiers who were on guard at Kensington. The queen was then dying—it was on a Friday evening. A little after daybreak on the Sunday morning there was a commotion in front of the gate leading to the palace, where a large crowd had already assembled, and the guards stood waiting for something. There was a blast of trumpets, and presently the heralds came forth to proclaim George Lewis, Elector of Hanover, King of England.

The succession had changed, and the throne was waiting for the son of Ernest Augustus Duke of Brunswick Luneburg and Elector of Hanover, and of Sophia the youngest child of

Frederick Elector Palatine and Elizabeth daughter of James the First. Bolingbroke and Ormond, the Tory leaders, had fled. Marlborough was on his way back, but was detained at Ostend. There would soon be new inmates, and the language of the court at Kensington Palace would be a foreign one, for the king could speak no English, and was not very likely to acquire a complete knowledge of the language, for he was fifty-four years old. His son George Augustus, now to be created Prince of Wales, was thirty, was already married to Caroline of Anspach, and their little son Frederick was seven, so that the new dynasty already seemed to be secured, while there was an additional advantage in the fact that George Augustus had served with the British under Marlborough, and had distinguished himself at Oudenarde.

The change of dynasty involved important changes in many other respects. William the Third had maintained the claims of personal government, but the conditions on which he had been accepted as King of England were in accordance with his own political professions and secured the authority and privilege of parliament. The restoration of the Stuart rule would have been impossible without a reactionary revolution, and those who had formed the new government were too strong for the conspirators who were in constant communication with the late king, whom the nation had never loved. It might have been said:

> "Pricked by the Papal spur we reared
> And flung the Second James;"

and this would have expressed the general sentiment, though men like Atterbury and other less distinguished representatives of the English Church were among those who took an eager part in the endeavour to bring over the Pretender, that he might be ready to mount the throne at the moment of Anne's death.

They might have succeeded in inducing the Queen to nominate her half-brother as her successor, which would at once have provoked a storm of opposition that could scarcely have stopped short of civil war, but Anne had become more infirm of purpose as her bodily infirmities increased, and the fury of the rival parties had driven her into a condition of constant timidity, which, while it made her subservient to the faction which was using every effort to keep in office, drove her to seek seclusion, at Hampton Court or Windsor, from the turbulent assemblies at St. James's. Yet in earlier days the Queen had been more than a mere lay-figure. She represented to the English people some very definite sentiments. She was an English queen, she made no demands that conflicted with the liberties secured by the constitution, and she was of a kindly and liberal nature, finding pleasure in acts of benevolence. Her coming to the throne was in a very popular sense a "restoration," and her name was "a name to conjure with." It seemed, to some, to open the door for James Francis Edward from St. Germains. But James the Second had alienated the English people, and his son was more French than English in character, manners, and language. His mother, Mary of Modena, was a foreigner; he had been educated in the Roman Catholic religion under the patronage of the French king, the arch-enemy of England and of political freedom; and if report spoke truly he had inherited or acquired the family vices and the family weakness and duplicity, even though he sometimes displayed an engaging courtesy, which belonged rather to his uncle Charles than to his father James the Second.

So much of wealth and liberty had been squandered in the attempt to make James accessible to reason, so much had been sacrificed to regain the rights which he had endeavoured to annul, that men, looking at the young Chevalier de St. George

—as he was called—and at the middle-aged George Louis, Elector of Hanover, saw in the latter an heir to the British throne, who, by religion, education, and experience in constitutional government, was most likely to leave the administration of the state in the hands of English ministers, and to refrain from attempting to reinforce that personal sovereignty which in either case would have been unbearable.

Nor were these conclusions ill founded. George the First was not a candidate for the throne of England. He received the intimation that he had been proclaimed with a reservation that was next to disappointment. He prepared to grasp the situation with the cool and assiduous determination which distinguished him, and set off as soon as he could to present himself to his new subjects; but he did so rather from a sense of the responsibility which had fallen upon him than with elation. George represented a branch of the great Guelph family, which on both his father's and mother's side was related to the Norman and the Saxon kings of England, by the marriage of Henry the Lion with Matilda, daughter of Henry the Second. Not only his son but his daughter, Sophia Dorothy, was already married when he came to England. He accepted the succession not with avidity but with reluctance, and never afterwards scrupled to show that Hanover stood far before England in his regard; and that he left his adopted country with satisfaction whenever his duties there permitted him to visit the land of his birth. It would, perhaps, be too much to say that he disliked England and the English people,—but he was not at home here, and he was too old to learn to sympathize with English manners, to assimilate himself to the peculiarities of English character, or even to acquire the language. "He could speak no English, and was past the learning of it." Only two

or three of the ministers of his council spoke French,—none of them German—and it is on record that Walpole, to whom he continued to intrust the control of affairs, had to manage the best way he could with conversation in Latin.

The court life at Kensington Palace and St. James's was of a quiet sort. The evening parties must have been dull enough for the few English peers or gentlemen and ladies who met the German friends of the King, including the repulsively gaunt and the monstrously corpulent ladies who had been respectively made Duchess of Kendal and Countess of Darlington, and of whom the least said here the better, as their rapacity was the theme of numberless satires and pasquinades; and their relations to the King, who brought them with him to England, were such as to have offended a truly moral court—if a truly moral court had been in existence at that period—in England or elsewhere. Not that society at the palace was conspicuously immoral. It was dreary—though occasionally there were episodes of rather forced merriment. The King was somewhat lazy in his recreations. The evening party mostly went to cards; if his Majesty visited the play-house or the opera he was carried in a sedan-chair, and sat like any private gentleman in the corner of a lady's box, "with a couple of Turks in waiting, instead of lords or grooms of the bedchamber." So Lady Townley—the wife of one of his ministers—wrote; and the couple of Turks appear, or once appeared, in the wall paintings at Kensington House. They seem to have been two faithful pages, named Mahomet and Mustapha, who had been taken prisoners by Prince Charles, brother to George the First, in the Austrian war against the Turks.

If George had exhibited no alacrity in assuming the English throne, he was not wanting in tenacity when he had once

occupied it. This was a part of his character, but it was also a part of his character to endeavour honourably to fulfil such duties as his rather narrow judgment and limited education enabled him to undertake. Doubtless he was always ready to promote any measure which appeared to be to the advantage of his Hanoverian kingdom, and much of the revenue which he personally derived from this country went there; but his character contrasted favourably with that of the Stuarts. His word could be depended on. In a dogged narrow kind of way he was anxious to do strict justice without much tinge of generosity, and on the other side with a persistence in punishing offenders which was often brutal in its want of sensibility. A dull, unsusceptible, hard man, with undeniable courage and firmness, and not much humour. On the whole meaning well, and so far as England was concerned, doing well, by leaving the government in the hands of ministers whom he had found could best carry on the work.

It is only necessary to touch lightly the story of the courts of the Georges at Kensington, St. James's, or Buckingham Palace. In the letters and other writings of Swift, Horace Walpole, of Lady Mary Wortley Montague, Pope, Steele, Addison, will be found pictures of the coarseness as well as of the polished courtesy of the society of that period; the society that met at Ranelagh, at Vauxhall, and sometimes in taverns, where titled dames would entertain their friends—as well as at those masked and costume balls where the license of the time and the merely conventional decency of some of the leaders of fashion permitted such scandals that public opinion rose against them.

It must be noted that the whole country teemed with political squibs, satirical songs and lampoons, skits upon the fashions and

bitter sarcastic letters and political libels, and furious defamatory denunciations. Nothing was safe from the ... of imputation which teemed from the press, and ... the songs, stories, and anonymous broadsides were either impious or obscene, though numbers of them were distinguished by genuine wit and literary ability. The political and other caricatures, too, became powerful factors in directing public opinion, and the best of them were, and are still, distinguished for marvellous faculty of art as well as for trenchant humour. Hogarth, Gillray, Rowlandson—how the three names stand forth, and what a power the men represented; though among the amazing number of pictures that Gillray and Rowlandson issued, especially among those of Rowlandson, are many that shock modern sensibilities because of their uncompromising coarseness. But they only somewhat exaggerated the actual coarseness of the day, and the dress, habits, and manners of the people whom they portrayed. The country, and of course more especially the town, was, so to speak, pelted with caricatures, pictorial and literary; and coarse and violent as many of these productions were, it can scarcely be denied that the caricaturists were sometimes among the most powerful of the moralists. Down to a date within living memory lampoon and caricature remained, if they do not still remain, a powerful factor in public life; as *The Caricature History of the Georges*, that able work compiled by the late Mr. Thomas Wright, abundantly testifies.

The dislike of George the First for his son had been so marked that, though it was afterwards concealed by an external compromise which enabled the Princess Caroline to attend the court at Kensington House and St. James's, there was no cordial regard. It has been stated that the determination of the Prince to defend the reputation of his mother against the charges brought

[illegible]st her, and the endeavours made [illegible] grandfather and the K[illegible] mpel her to agree to a formal divorce, was the cause of th[illegible]d animosity, but it was also alleged that the King resented the independent action of the Prince who was left as regent during his Majesty's visits to Hanover. However this may have been, it was certain that there was no love lost between father and son; and though the daughter of George the First (Sophia Dorothy) had, in 1706, married Frederick William, afterwards King of Prussia, and the chief place at court was therefore left to the Princess of Wales, we have seen that there was also no love lost between the King and his son's wife. But Caroline had a rare if somewhat a motley following of wits, poets, divines, and men of science, as well as of beauties, and she herself, of tall and commanding presence, and with no small pretensions to beauty, was well able to hold her own, even when the King and her husband were on the worst of terms, and while the Prince was in political opposition at a time when the efforts of the Jacobites added to the embarrassment of the government.

It is so difficult as to be almost impossible to make a trustworthy estimate of the real character and disposition of the eminent personages of that time. The whole atmosphere of the court and of society was one of detraction and those disparaging slanders that belong to the meanest and most spiteful exhibitions of party spirit. From the time that we have already glanced at, and of which we may read in Horace Walpole's letters, down to this later period—and even to the time of the French Revolution, to which his flighty, heartless records extend—levity, scandal-mongering, and misrepresentation seem to pervade the successive circles that moved in the precincts of the palace. Lord Chesterfield, Selwyn, Hanbury Williams, and Beau Nash King of Bath, were the contemporaries of Walpole, who saw

out many fashions and many successive beauties: the Bellendens and Lepells, who were followed by Miss Chudleigh—the maid of honour who married first the Earl of Bristol and then a duke; and the Misses Gunning—those famous beauties who were mobbed by an admiring crowd whenever they appeared in public, and who received offers of marriage from the highest noblemen of England, till one of them became Countess of Coventry and the other the Duchess of Hamilton. So determined was the Duke of Hamilton to marry the younger of these two sisters, that he insisted on an extempore wedding; and having met the lady at Lord Chesterfield's sent for a parson, who, refusing to perform the ceremony without license or ring, at last agreed to use the ring of a curtain and married them in Mayfair Chapel. There was nothing very unusual in this, for the Fleet marriages, as they were called, were not only permitted, but had grown to be fashionable, and any couple could get a parson to perform the ceremony in a few minutes for a fee that sometimes did not amount to more than a bottle of wine or half a guinea. Society in these days was riotous, dissipated, and apparently reckless. Vauxhall and Ranelagh were by no means the worst examples of the manners of high life; and it may be declared that there was a degree of brutality, ignorance, and gross indifference to morality among some of those who belonged to the ranks of title and fashion, which is not now commonly found in any class, and may be illustrated by reference to the plays and novels of the time, and emphasized by the accounts of the "Mohocks," the "Scowrers," and the bands of fashionable bullies and drunkards, who made the streets of London terrible to timid and decent people compelled to be abroad after nightfall. Footpads in the thoroughfares and purlieus of town, and highwaymen no further off than Kensington itself, added to the dangers

that beset those who went out, even for a short distance, unprotected, but a section of the fashionable world had little more to boast of on the score of morals than the heroes of Gay's *Beggar's Opera*. When a waiter at Arthur's Coffee-house was arrested for robbery George Selwyn said, "What a horrid idea he will give of us to the people in Newgate!" and the sarcasm had a deep truth in it. But they were marvellous times for all that. When George the First, dying of an apoplectic fit in his carriage on the way to Osnaburg, left the throne vacant for his already middle-aged successor, the country was prosperous and rising in power among nations; and though George the Second was an obstinate, self-sufficient, and conceited little sovereign, he was not altogether without the qualities that were needed for holding his own and taking a prominent part in the affairs of the world. At all events he possessed that personal courage which is always a valuable quality, as he showed when he led his men, sword in hand, at Dettingen, and though he had the egregious vanity, which could not rest without his prowess and accomplishments being made conspicuous by the compliments of his courtiers, he was not otherwise devoid of the sturdy common-sense that had distinguished his father.

The fashions of dress during the greater part of the reign of George the Second were as preposterous as the manners, though artificially courteous, were wanting in real decorum. Enormous hoops, paniers, and sacks or loose robes over vast expanses of whaleboned petticoats— were succeeded by towering head-dresses, constructed of horse-hair, grease, and flour, finished off with lace, bows, flowers, and feathers. Some of these "heads," as they were called, were designed to represent cabriolets (a fashion brought from France), post-chaises, and even wagons, and mingled with the natural hair as a foundation and plastered

into a solid edifice, were worn for weeks without being opened and the monstrous rows of curls combed out. The dresses of some of the men who aspired to be beaux were absurd; the wigs being of stupendous size, the coat either artificially spread out in the skirts or reduced to a mere jacket, and the stockings "clocked" in various devices. There was no end to the vagaries of the fops who were called, or called themselves, macaronis, and wore an immense knot of artificial hair at the back of the head, a very small cocked hat, and jacket, waistcoat, and breeches cut down to the closest dimensions, the costume being completed by a tremendous, knotted walking-stick furnished with huge tassels. The lives of people of fashion were passed in trivial pursuits, and there appeared to be little delicacy or propriety as there was scarcely any privacy. The fashion of receiving company at the *levée* or morning toilette was common. A set of verses entitled "A Modern Morning," written in 1757, is little exaggerated. The lady, after taking her chocolate, has risen from bed.

"Then Celia to her toilet goes,
Attended by some fav'rite beaux,
Who fribble it around the room,
And curl her hair and clean the comb.
And do a thousand monkey tricks
That you would think disgraced the sex."

The *Spectator* and other periodicals of that day frequently refer to these morning receptions, and they are sufficiently indicative of the manners of the time when in fashionable society there was little modest reserve, and when people with any pretensions to "ton" lived in a kind of publicity which led to their flaunting vices and foibles as though they were evidences of good breeding.

It need scarcely be said that the conversation and some of the amusements at the levées and assemblies of Caroline of Anspach would not be tolerated now even among people of lower rank, but Caroline was superior in delicacy and in other respects to many of the "ladies of quality" who assisted in her boudoir. Lord Hervey (the vice-chamberlain), who wrote a kind of satirical comedy representing a supposed scene on the intelligence of his own death, gives us the impression that the conversation was vapid enough, that the Queen was a good-natured soul, with capacity for the smallest of small talk. But Queen Caroline was watchful and sagacious under a slightly skittish assumption of a desire to engage in conversation with clever people, and to listen to theological controversies, about doctrines to which, as far as can be known, she was indifferent, except as they may have afforded intellectual diversion, or even the lower kind of amusement derived from setting dogmatists by the ears. Lord Hervey's not very pleasant "skit" is as wanting in taste as its author was in honour, but the fact that it was read in the royal circle and afforded much amusement shows what could be tolerated there.

In the first part of this comedy the Queen is represented at the toilette in her dressing-room with the princesses and the ladies of the bed-chamber, Lady Stanhope, Lady Burlington, and Lady Sundon. Morning prayers are being said in the next room, of which the door is partly open; and the Queen says, "I pray, my good Lady Sundon, shut a little that door, those creatures pray so loud we cannot hear one's self speak [Lady Sundon goes to shut the door]. So, so; not quite so much; leave it open enough for these parsons to think we may hear, and enough shut that we may not hear quite so much."

It has been explained that this satirical passage does not

honestly represent the Queen's attitude towards religious offices, to which, though she was in general indifferent, she accorded reverence when they were supported by men of learning and of religious sincerity; but what strikes us is that a chief official of the court in constant attendance should have written a drama in which this and other professed reproductions of the scenes at a morning levée and reception should have been accepted, and have caused, not offence, but amusement.

It was not altogether a pleasant society at Kensington Palace at that time. George the Second with his high-heeled shoes, his swagger and assumption of dignity, his boasting of a courage which nobody could deny, his conceited airs, intended to carry a notion of gallantry, appeared to be artificial even when his intentions were honest. He was nearly as brusque as George the First; but he, of course, spoke English fluently, though with an accent, and this gave him a greater advantage. He was as avaricious and more meanly parsimonious than his father, but yet he was ready to disburse large sums on occasions, and never went from his word if he had promised to give or to pay. Happily for him and for the nation the Queen exercised great and constant influence over him, which she had acquired without his knowing it, and maintained because he scarcely suspected it. She was a woman of great tact, and was able to manage him without his perceiving that she did so, because she was his confidante. He consulted her about everything that concerned him. Even his faults and more than frailties she condoned, humoured, and to some extent controlled. That he loved her as deeply as he could love anybody was not to be doubted, and she deserved it, for she sacrificed what most women would have considered to be self-respect rather than alienate his confidence; and she may be said to have shortened

her life for the sake of her dutiful attendance on him, plunging her rheumatic feet into cold water that she might, with whatever difficulty, walk with him in Kensington Gardens or ride in her hunting chaise at Hampton Court.

In the promenade at Kensington the King and Queen were in early days surrounded by a bevy of princesses, for, beside Frederick Prince of Wales, and William Augustus Duke of Cumberland, there were five girls, two of whom never married, while the eldest and the two youngest married, respectively, the Prince of Orange, the Landgrave of Hesse, and Frederick the Fifth, King of Denmark. Neither Frederick, Prince of Wales, nor his wife made long visits to Kensington: for if there had been dislike and disagreement between George the First and his son, the feeling of George the Second towards his son Frederick amounted to detestation. Nor was this profound aversion confined to the King. Neither his mother nor his sisters could long endure the society of the Prince of Wales, who never seemed to lose an opportunity of opposing his father, either by supporting the adverse faction in parliament, or by demands for money at the very time that he was acting with shameless animosity.

Whatever were his faults of manners and of violent temper George the Second was honest and true to his word; he was so regular in his engagements that it was said of him that "the fact of his having done a thing to-day was a reason why he should do the same thing to-morrow;" and he was undoubtedly brave, temperate, and honourable in fulfilling his promises. Frederick was, in many respects, the reverse; and his tastes were low; his conduct marked by want of feeling and a falseness and irresolution which caused unmistakable dislike and an expression of contempt to be applied to him by his parents, his

sisters, and even by ministers and politicians, except those who had something to gain by a temporary adhesion to his interests. He had been a trouble and an anxiety to his mother from boyhood, and in manhood he traduced and insulted her even after he was married to the Princess Augusta of Saxe-Gotha, and made occasional visits to Kensington, where he would annoy the Queen by going late to the chapel, and making his wife, instead of entering by another door, squeeze to her seat between the Queen and her Majesty's prayer-book.

William Augustus, the Duke of Cumberland, was not often at court either. He was with his father at Dettingen, and was afterwards, as everybody knows, engaged in the suppression of the rebellion which greeted the arrival of the Pretender in Scotland. In his case, as in that of every prominent personage of the time, it is difficult to estimate the popular opinion, for on one hand enthusiasm for his signal success and the victory at Culloden led to his being spoken of in terms of adulation, while the bright and fragrant flower known as Sweet William is said to have been named after him; on the other hand, the cruelties which under his authority were needlessly and indiscriminately inflicted on the wretched people of the Highlands after the suppression of the rebellion, gained for him the appellation of "the Butcher," and this with his corpulence gave the cue for numberless caricatures and lampoons. The duke never married. In the latter part of his father's reign he was driven from Hanover by the French and returned to England, where he lived but little noticed till 1765, five years after his father's death, when he died after a stroke of palsy.

The Queen had died in 1737, but the event did not take place at Kensington Palace. George was deeply affected at his wife's death, declaring that he had never seen another woman

who was worthy to buckle her shoe, and perhaps he then awoke to the consciousness of all that she had borne for his sake; including the knowledge of his immoralities and the uncontradicted aspersions that had attributed his parsimony and avarice to her influence. His sense of her loss did not, however, prevent him from bringing Madame Walmoden from Hanover and making her Duchess of Yarmouth.

Caroline had on her death-bed recommended the King to the minister in whose sagacity she had so long confided, and Walpole continued for some time to maintain his pre-eminent influence, but other times and other complications were at hand; the new alliance against France, the war which drained the King's private resources for the protection of Hanover, the political situation, which, after Walpole had been made a peer, led to the administration of the elder Pitt, and the subsequent stirring period in which England recovered and triumphed over threatened adversity, closed the reign of the second sovereign of the house of Brunswick-Hanover.

The Prince of Wales was still a thorn in the side of the King—still had his party, which was ready to push the tactics of faction almost to rebellion—but there had been a tacit tolerance on the part of his Majesty, and a more decent regard for appearances on the part of the prince, for some time before the death of the latter, which occurred after a short illness in 1751, when he was forty-five years old. The cold self-contained King was greatly affected when Lord North was sent to him with the intelligence. The King, who was playing at cards—for it was in the evening—immediately went down to Lady Yarmouth, looking extremely pale and shocked, and only said, "Il est mort;" but brief as the remark may appear, and little as it might have implied, the conduct, kind and even gentle.

of the King to the widow was a proof that he was not destitute of a feeling of deep regret and of compassion for her and her children. George the Second was, so far as we can judge, a better man and a more kindly one, than his reserved nature and disdain of pretending to an interest in pursuits and conversation for which he did not really care, led people to imagine.

At the death of Queen Caroline the court at Kensington Palace underwent considerable changes. On the death of George the Second it ceased to be held there; for his grandson, George the Third, abandoned it as a royal residence. George the Second had survived his troublesome son for above eight years. Early in the morning of the 25th of October, 1760, he had risen as usual, had taken his chocolate according to rule, and was about to go down for a walk, when his valet, hearing a heavy fall, ran into the room. The King was either dead before he could be raised from the floor or died immediately afterwards; one account being that he had said, "Call Amelia," referring to his daughter, who, coming presently, but because of her deafness being unable at once to understand what had occurred, did not perceive that he was dead till she went to look at him lying on the bed or couch where he had been placed. The cause of his death was the bursting of the right ventricle of the heart. He was seventy-eight years old.

Frederick, his son, had left six children, George William Frederick, who, as George the Third, succeeded his grandfather; Edward Augustus, Duke of York, who was never married; William Henry, Duke of Gloucester, who married the Countess Waldegrave, and whose son Frederick William married the Princess Mary, daughter of George the Third; Henry Frederick, Duke of Cumberland, who married Lady Luttrell, but left no children; the Princess Augusta who married the Duke of

Brunswick-Wolfenbuttel and was mother of the Duke of Brunswick who fell at Quatre Bras, of Charlotte who married the Duke of Wurtemburg, and of Caroline the erratic and unfortunate princess who became the wife of George the Fourth. The younger daughter of Frederick was married to Christian the Seventh, King of Denmark.

George the Third was the first sovereign of the Hanoverian dynasty born in England, and from his earliest years he appears to have gloried in being English. He was only a boy of thirteen when his father died, and he had been kept in such retirement, not to say seclusion, by his mother and her friend and counsellor the Earl of Bute, that little was known of him in the court or society till he became of age. It is recorded that "till he was twenty-one years old he had never been introduced to the privy-council, nor matriculated at either of the universities, nor had he ever been allowed to display the powers of his mind, his judgment, or his taste in the selection of his associates: that he had been held in a state of liberal seclusion as absolute and unbroken as if his capacity to fulfil the varied and weighty functions of a king had depended upon his remaining a stranger to those future functions, utterly ignorant of the character of his subjects."

This is taken from the point of view of a political opponent of Lord Bute; but it was unquestionable that when, at the age of twenty-three, George the Third came to the throne his attainments were not conspicuous, though it was pretty generally declared that the instructors who had the charge of forming his ideas had impressed upon him the power which he should exercise when he became King, and the personal authority which belonged to the royal prerogative, even if they had stopped short of preaching the doctrine of arbitrary rule. At

the same time he was kept under the strict control of his mother and the Earl of Bute, with the object, it was believed, of their being able to retain power in their own hands by acting through his instrumentality. He was for some years even made to continue to dress in a more juvenile fashion than his age warranted, that his mother might subject him to those domestic restraints, which he never appeared to resent with any violence, though they were carried so far as to make him frequently listless and even sullen. Of course the influence of Bute was made the subject of gross and venomous scandals and caricatures against the dowager princess—for John Stuart, Earl of Bute, was considerably detested, and though, when he became the head of the ministry on the accession of the prince, he appeared to encourage literature and the arts, he was himself more conspicuous for his pride and overweening ambition than for his talents, and it soon became plain enough that the literature of which he became the patron was that of the men, amongst whom was Smollett, who were on what was called the Jacobite or high Tory side, and would write to support the royal authority and arbitrary power.

Frederick Prince of Wales had first made the acquaintance of the young Scotch nobleman at some private theatricals at the house of the Duchess of Queensberry, where he performed the part of Lothario in "The Fair Penitent." He was invited to Leicester House and became a companion of the prince, after whose death he remained the confidant of the dowager princess, who gave him the office of groom of the stole, a position from which, by participating in the political intrigues that were carried on at Leicester House, he contrived to obtain an influence which, after the resignation of the elder Pitt, who was created Earl of Chatham, led to his succeeding Newcastle as first lord of the treasury.

There can be no doubt that the education of George the Third was seriously neglected, but it is at the same time doubtful whether his intellectual power was such as to have enabled him to attain any distinction in the higher branches of study. He never could be induced to apply himself to Greek and Latin, and though he was said to have gained some proficiency in music, of which he was a good judge, and also to have a knowledge of mathematics and mechanics, and more than a mere taste for the study of astronomy, it is probable that the subjection in which he was held, the strife and suspicion which were too prominent in the household, and his own natural inclination for a quiet rural life, united to increase a natural depression which was habitual with him. All accounts agree in representing him to have been, even as a youth, singularly temperate in his habits, precise and careful in his demeanour, and with a simple kindliness and affection in his relations to his family. It would appear that, to use a common expression, the dowager princess was of a "nagging" temper in her relations to her eldest son. Perhaps she could not admire or appreciate a youth who displayed neither scholarly accomplishments nor what were then regarded as elegant manners. But George maintained a dignity of his own, though he dressed plainly and his manner was quiet even in his amusements. He was never lacking in courage, was fond of riding spirited horses, was tall and well-proportioned enough to look well in the saddle, and was distinguished for a certain determination of demeanour, and a directness and honesty of purpose which are often associated with the kind of firmness that may degenerate to obstinacy under opposition. It was unfortunate that the lessons which he received on the subject of royal authority served to warp an intellect somewhat narrow, and to lead to violent assertions of determined

self-will on occasions when his opinions were opposed to those of his advisers who could best estimate the attitude of the nation. His really strong religious principles and his genuine desire to rule wisely and for the benefit of the country did not always enable him soon to overcome the smouldering anger with which he regarded any representation which he fancied was an attempted infringement of his prerogative, and for which he expressed his resentment by secluding himself from his ministers and nursing his wrath in moody contemplation of the affront offered to his royal authority by any strong expression of an opinion contrary to his own. There can be little question that these fits of obstinate self-assertion and the accompanying irritability at any contradiction or remonstrance were attributable to a defective training acting on a tendency which in later years became so pronounced as more than once temporarily to impair the mental balance when subjected to strong provocation, and this may be sufficient to account for the malady which rendered it necessary on two or three occasions for him to go into retirement, leaving his son, the Prince of Wales, to act as Regent.

This, however, belongs to a later date, and forms no part of the narrative with which these pages are concerned. Nor need we enter for more than a moment upon the records of the comparatively pure and blameless life of the youth who, at twenty-three years old, succeeded to the throne of George the Second. By the real goodness of his intentions and the practical virtues which distinguished his personal character George the Third may be said to have commenced a new era in the history of court life; and one or two stories of early attractions are by contrast so innocent, that even if they were proved to be true they would have no weight against the untarnished chronicle of a domestic fidelity which afforded no

opportunity even to the unscrupulous libellers and scandal-mongers who were ever on the watch to assail the private, no less than the political, relations of the throne. It was generally known and accepted at the time that Prince George of Wales had formed a youthful but still a deep and ardent attachment to the young and charming Lady Sarah Lennox, daughter of the Duke of Richmond. The prince, who was much engaged in out-door recreations, was said to have seen the young lady on some occasion when she was at a haymaking, in which she and some aristocratic companions were taking a playful part, but, at anyrate, they had many opportunities of meeting, and the prince earnestly urged his suit, to be met with a refusal, which had the effect of making him so unhappy that he gave up his field-sports and neglected dogs and horses. Then, it is said, the young lady relented, and there was really an engagement between them, which, though it was not cancelled by the dowager princess and her adviser, neither of whom, perhaps, dared to carry matters with such a high hand, came to an end on the sudden accession of the prince to the throne, when the view of public duty which was adopted by the young King, and had probably been constantly presented to him, led him to relinquish his intention to marry Lady Sarah and to make her his consort. The conviction that such a marriage was not permissible seems to have grown in intensity afterwards, and to have led him not only to endeavour to control his brothers in their choice, and to prevent them from forming any other legal ties than those that would mate them with royal families, but also at a still later date to his promotion of the Royal Marriage Act—a measure which secured little and inflicted much, as it probably caused more evils than it was designed to prevent.

The intelligence of the death of his grandfather was conveyed to the young prince on The Hundred Acres of Banstead Downs, whither he had ridden to follow a stag that was to have been turned out. The prince was preparing for the chase when the messenger arrived, and he at once got off his horse to question the man. Accounts that were afterwards published professing to be from the statements of attendants remind one of the declarations of Mr. Perch, the messenger to the firm of "Dombey and Son," who used to confide to his acquaintances the remarks made to him by eminent clients of the house during the crisis of its history. One report represents the prince as saying, when he heard the tidings of the King's death, "Poor old gentleman! I little expected these tidings this morning, for the King was remarkably well last night;" and represents him to have been much affected by the thought of the grief of his aunt Amelia. Another equally authentic addition to the story is that he said, "God rest his soul and enable her to bear this heavy blow! All the pleasures of this life are now for ever past with me;" a sufficiently remarkable observation unless it had reference to his dread of responsibilities which he afterwards undertook with no little resolution, or to the conviction that he would now be compelled to relinquish the object of his affections. Similar accounts, including that of Sir Levett Hanson, imply that the means taken by the dowager princess and Lord Bute to separate the lovers and to impress the prince with the dire effects of his persisting in the determination to marry Lady Sarah, had the effect of convincing him that it was necessary for the sake of his mother's happiness and the good of the nation to sacrifice his deepest feelings; and it is even represented that he expressed some fear that his mind would not bear up against the shock of disappointment, but that he finally wrote a letter

full of bitter regret and tender sorrow to the lady, explaining that he was called upon to make this sacrifice to duty.

These representations, however, have to be regarded with caution; for, at all events, Lady Sarah Lennox having been, of course, prohibited from all further correspondence with the prince, recovered from her disappointment sufficiently to be present at the marriage of her former lover to the princess whom he had chosen for his consort.

It says something also for his firmness and determination that in an extraordinary council in the year following his accession he announced that he had made his choice; that ever since his accession he had turned his thoughts towards a princess for his consort, and that, after mature deliberation, he had come to a resolution to demand in marriage the Princess Charlotte of Mecklenburg-Strelitz. In the following year the marriage took place, and the joint coronation followed in September, so that no time was lost in vain regrets, if any such existed.

With the court of George the Third there is no need to occupy these pages. Enough to say that the simple decorum and the orderly domestic character of the king was shared by his consort, a precise, somewhat formal, but not arrogant and not unkindly little woman, with no pretensions to beauty, but with a very decided opinion of what was due to the somewhat exacting etiquette and assiduous attention which she demanded of maids of honour and attendants, and with a keen eye to economy. It should be recorded, however, that her alleged avarice, and even the supposed parsimony and stinginess with which both she and the King were charged in endless libellous pictures and coarse lampoons, had little foundation except in comparison to the extravagance of their sons, and the examples set by those who could be profuse at the expense of creditors,

or in the expectation of obtaining aid from parliament to pay their debts.

The court was no longer held at Kensington Palace, nor did the King and Queen ever reside there. Perhaps not without reason George the Third seems to have had a dislike for the place or its associations, and preferred Buckingham House, where the levées of the King were held from the year 1806 to 1810, in fact till he became unable to attend even though they were private receptions. Buckingham House, or "the Queen's House" as it was then commonly called, was not a palace, but was a large and finely arranged mansion, very beautifully situated in St. James's Park on the site occupied by the present palace, to make room for which the original house was pulled down in 1825 by order of George the Fourth. Buckingham House was built by a Captain Wynde, a native of Bergen-op-Zoom, for John Sheffield, Duke of Buckingham, the poet and patron of Dryden. At his death in 1721 the Prince and Princess of Wales (afterwards George the Second and Queen Caroline) endeavoured to purchase it of the widow, but did not succeed; but in 1761 George the Third bought it of Sir Charles Sheffield for £21,000, and settled it on Queen Charlotte as a substitute for Somerset House, the former palace or house of the Protector Somerset, which then occupied the site of the present pile of public buildings, and had always been recognized as part of the jointure of the Queen-consort.

When George the Third and Queen Charlotte left their favourite Windsor to come to London, Buckingham House was their home, and there all their children were born, excepting their eldest son, George, Prince of Wales.

The royal family was a large one, and was not in all respects distinguished for the docility which might have been better de-

veloped under a less precise and rigid domestic government than that which appears to have been employed by the royal parents. George the Third was not only deeply influenced and very injuriously affected by the seclusion and suppression to which he had in early life been subjected, but he made the mistake of displaying, in the domestic sphere, the arbitrary power which he had afterwards been taught that he possessed. In the domestic sphere, however, it is most desirable that such power, if it be exercised at all, should never be allowed to show itself in sullen, unreasoning obstinacy, but should be tempered with parental wisdom. This wisdom it may be feared the head of the nation did not possess, though he had a kindly heart and a fund of sound common sense which supplied the place of judgment when it was not obscured by gusts and fits of a temper, doubtless partly attributable to the effects of a mental malady, which recurred in a marked form only at long intervals until near the end of a protracted life, when he remained altogether in retirement.

If the discipline of the royal family was somewhat rigid and monotonous, the court etiquette was also precise and even severe, while it was simple and unostentatious. The royal household was unpretentious, there were no magnificent hospitalities, few splendid festivities—too few, perhaps, since some of those which had in earlier times been regarded as essential to the royal state and of which a revival was expected, were not observed. Queen Charlotte was a shrewd, sensible, gentle-speaking, decorous, very plain-looking little woman, with a certain pride which exacted not only the deference of state courtesy, but the drilled manner of conventional respectability and morality. This was perhaps all that could be enforced in a society which had to be reconstituted among the persons chosen by the sov-

ereign as personal attendants. That the court was dull, and the duties of the ladies and maids of honour arduous and even exhausting, may be learned perhaps from the pages of the diary of Madame d'Arblay—the Miss Burney whose name is so intimately associated with the Johnsonian recollections;—but probably nobody who had the means of knowing anything of the royal family really doubted the goodness and—underlying her narrow precision and parsimony—the kindly nature of Queen Charlotte. Most certainly she did not accumulate money for the purpose of indulging in personal extravagance or selfish gratification. At her death, when her will was proved, it was found that she had no hoard of wealth—that her possessions were in fact so few that except by the sale or distribution of her valuable jewels she was unable to leave any considerable legacies to her daughters. Possibly such money as she could command had been spent in trying to avert the effects of the extravagance of some of her sons, who had as vast a faculty for public display, for enormous extravagance, and getting into debt and endeavouring to shift the responsibility of it, as their mother had for avoiding such liabilities. It is only fair to believe she may have contrived to secure much privacy and seclusion not only because of her own disposition, but for the purpose of preserving the quiet mode of living which she thought was essential to the health of the King, whose condition no less than his tastes made it desirable that he should have frequent intervals of retirement from public excitement.

The more domestic life of the royal family during the boyhood of the sons of George the Third was frequently passed at Kew, where the royal dukes received their early education under preceptors who prepared them for school or college. Kew House had belonged to Samuel Molineux, who was secretary to George

the Second while he was Prince of Wales. He was known as "an ingenious astronomer." The Prince took a lease of the house, and often resided there, and it afterwards came into the possession of his son Frederick, who commenced the formation of Kew Gardens, and his widow continued to reside there, and in 1760 established the Botanic Garden. After her death George the Third renewed the lease; and the associations of the place, unlike those of Kensington, were so agreeable to him that he commenced building a new palace on a spot nearly opposite the familiar house, but the building was unattractive in appearance and inconvenient in its arrangements, was never completed, and remained unfinished until it was taken down. Close to the spot where this building was erected, however, was an old house which, in 1781, had been bought in trust for the Queen, who had taken over a long lease of it, and this ancient mansion was in reality the residence of various members of the royal family. It was here that George the Fourth was educated, and here Queen Charlotte died in 1818.

The history of political and national events of the period over which we have been passing forms no part of the introductory references necessary to the narrative which is to occupy the following pages. The tremendous episodes of the establishment of American independence; the French Revolution, the excesses of which had the result of consolidating and maintaining British loyalty and patriotism; and the long and determined opposition by which England became instrumental in breaking down the usurpation of Napoleon Bonaparte on the Continent of Europe were all included in the long and, speaking after the manner of loyal histories, "the glorious" reign of George the Third. Our retrospect, however, has been for the purpose of tracing the succession by which a reign truly noble, and

attended with beneficent influences, inaugurated a new era of the social and domestic life of the nation. It is, of course, to be remembered that the accession of George the Third was also an event which exercised a vast influence, because of the character of a sovereign who from early youth had manifested a simple and sincere regard for religion and morality. At the moment that he ascended the throne he emphatically declared his intention to uphold the claims of both, and by his domestic example, and his determination to discountenance the vices which had too long prevailed in society, he gave powerful aid to those who were earnestly engaged in promoting the moral and religious improvement of the people. Excesses that had been regarded without abhorrence, even if not with complacency, while they seemed to be countenanced by the manners of a dissolute circle associated with the court, were no longer openly tolerated by those who sought the favour of a King and Queen who during a long married life maintained mutual confidence and faithful affection. The royal approval and assistance were never sought in vain for efforts to raise the standard of public virtue above the brutal debauchery and gross sensual indulgence which had too strongly marked the manners of a vast section of the population. At the same time, various institutions for increasing education and promoting art and science, which had already been established or proposed, were rapidly developed. Numbers of energetic and enthusiastic men found that the time had come when their efforts would be successful in organizing and directing well-devised means for the rescue of society from much of the vice and ignorance by which it was debased.

Though the court of George the Third was unlike that of his predecessors, there appeared to be much quarrelling and disorder among the members of the royal family. The royal

dukes were perpetually opposing each other in politics, and frequently disregarding the opinions of the King, but there seems to have been a good deal of genuine affection, especially between the elder brothers, in times of trouble and domestic sorrow.

Perhaps the exception was Ernest, who became Duke of Cumberland on the death of his uncle, the brother of George the Third. There has scarcely been a man in the history of the country for the last seventy years who contrived to make himself less popular, or indeed more generally detested, than "the dreary, galloping duke," as he used sometimes to be called; but we shall have to say a few words about him presently.

It can scarcely be said that George the Third was ever on very good terms with all his sons at the same time, even if he was heartily in sympathy with any of them after they had passed the days of childhood. In fact, from boyhood they were a troublesome family, and as they grew older some of them had to be sent away to Germany or elsewhere to school or college. Neither of their royal parents possessed the qualities necessary to control or to direct a number of lads who inherited a considerable amount of self-will, and were by their position able to disregard many of the restraints to which youths in ordinary stations are more easily subjected.

There were very remarkable differences of character in the princes, and neither father nor mother appears to have been able wisely to discriminate, so that the more really amiable, sincere, and obedient member of the family—Edward Augustus, afterwards Duke of Kent—appears to have received the fewest marks of regard, his very frankness, and a certain fearless truthfulness and independence of character, placing him at a peculiar disadvantage, which led to his being left out of the

family circle, so far as a cordial recognition of his real merits was concerned. He spent most of his time in military service abroad, and was so strict and assiduous in the performance of his duties that on more than one occasion those under his command were inclined to resent, as exactions, the details of discipline which he conceived to be necessary for restoring and maintaining efficiency. While his elder brother, the Duke of York, was, as commander-in-chief of the army, occupying a high position in England, and (apart from the episode which led to his being accused, and put on his trial, for conniving at the reception of bribes for promotion) effecting reforms which not only compelled officers in the army to study their profession, but vastly increased the comfort and efficiency of the men, the Duke of Kent was left almost entirely without the kind of personal support which should have been extended to one whose courage and ability commanded public distinction. He always felt that he was neglected, and that he had little to hope either from his father or his two elder brothers—the Prince Regent and the Commander-in-Chief. It is not easy to determine whether this sense of being neglected and excluded was partly owing to a kind of sensitiveness which was too ready to take a gloomy view of the apparent indifference which comes of separation and the worldly maxim of "everyone looking after his own interests." It is true that the debts which the Duke of Kent incurred—and explained as being inevitable, because of the position in which he was placed and the orders he received—were paid, after some delays, and that he received promotions, but the latter came at times when they had the effect of increasing his financial difficulties. It would appear, also, that he was conscious of being left unnoticed, unless he made repeated applications, which, as they might be resented as extortions, he patiently deferred

until his condition seriously affected his spirits. This led him to believe that he was, from some unexplained cause, out of the pale of family sympathy, and compelled to occupy a position such as that endured by the "whipping boy" in ancient school-days, when an unfortunate lad was nominated to receive the punishment deserved by but not inflicted upon royal or aristocratic scholars.

It might have been suspected that his impressions were the result of a morbid fancy, but singularly enough there were evidences that the complaints which he afterwards made had considerable foundation. It would appear from the testimony of those best able to judge that the very frankness and uncompromising truthfulness of his nature caused him to be oppressed. "He could not dissemble;" and if he had committed a fault, would not deny it, but if questions were asked would at once take the consequences of acknowledging it with outspoken courage, even in the face of impending severe punishment.

It seems highly probable that to a temper like that of George the Third this would come like defiance and obstinacy, which required to be broken by any means that could be made effectual; while the boy himself may have been unconscious that he had done anything which had not been demanded by a regard for honour. However this may have been, he was sent when he was eighteen years old to the dreary town of Luneburg to study military science under the direction of a Baron Wagenheim, whose chief aim, whether under orders from the king or not, seems to have been to keep his charge under the strictest and most oppressive discipline, and on his own account to pocket the allowance of £1000 a year granted to the prince, to whom he doled out a guinea and a half a week, which,

after it had been reduced by the infliction of certain fines, was to provide for all personal expenses.

This short allowance does not seem to have been an exception, however, for the Duke of Sussex declared late in life to a friend that till he was one-and-twenty his pocket-money never exceeded a guinea a week;—that when he was one-and-thirty an income of £2000 a year was allotted to him, and that at that time he was always in arrears and poor. The younger dukes at all events seem to have been but meanly provided for in their early years; and yet they saw with what reckless profusion their eldest brother the Prince Regent spent money, and either witnessed or heard of the showy splendour and costly hospitalities of Carlton House. They knew of the vast sums of debt incurred for excesses and indulgences, which were paid for, even though they were continually resented and denounced, by the nation, and when their turn came it can scarcely be wondered at that, with a common tendency to extravagance which seemed to be a glaring and almost an alarming reaction against the personal economy of the king and queen, they should launch into expenses without any very serious apprehension of the consequences. The Duke of Sussex, however, was in England, and led for the most part a quiet life; while the Duke of Kent was abroad, and engaged in military duties in various parts of the world. After a year at Luneburg he was transferred to Hanover to continue his studies, where he was under the same restrictions, and subjected to a surveillance which he declared included intercepting his letters to his father, who, not hearing from him, attributed his silence to an undutiful temper, and at the same time received false reports of his conduct and complaints of his extravagance, though he was still limited to his guinea and a half a week, and was not allowed either horse or carriage.

From Hanover he was sent to Geneva, but without any increase of pocket-money, though his governor received £6000 a year for maintaining an establishment. He had now passed his twenty-second year, and being unable any longer to endure the position in which he was detained, and receiving no satisfactory reply to his requests, he started for London without asking permission of anybody, and after five years' absence found himself at an hotel in King Street, writing for permission to see his father, who angrily refused to receive him, though his two elder brothers—the Prince of Wales and the Duke of York—interceded for him. After a fortnight of suspense he received orders to go at once to Gibraltar, with an intimation that the King would grant him a short interview on the night before his departure.

Whatever may have taken place during this hurried visit, the position of the young prince was altered, for it would appear that he went out to Gibraltar to take command of the 7th Fusiliers, of which he was made colonel, and that he was allowed £5000 a year. He still, however, required a sum of money to pay for an establishment and outfit, as he had nothing provided for him, and no sufficient sum being forthcoming, he went into debt, with the not unusual result of so far exceeding his immediate expectations that he had to make prospective arrangements with his creditors, to whom he gave bonds which were to be redeemed in seven years. His debts amounted to £20,000, so that when he was ordered with his regiment to Canada he was obliged to sell off everything belonging to him at Gibraltar, and to pay his most pressing creditors; and as he was again without any allowance for outfit and equipment, he had no resource but to incur fresh liabilities. Like a good many other young men who have extravagant tastes and have not learnt how to begin to practise economy, he com-

plained that he never had a fair start, and in his case the complaint was not groundless. He was compelled to go into debt for the personal and household equipments which were immediately necessary; and, perhaps for the very reason that he could not pay for them at once, ordered many more than he really required, only to find that the position and appearance which he desired or was expected to maintain absorbed his entire income. His pecuniary misfortunes were enormously aggravated by the actual loss of consecutive outfits on which he had expended money or credit. In 1793 he had to leave Quebec (in little more than two years) to join the expedition against the French West India Islands, and his effects were again sold, as an entirely different equipment had to be obtained. This was lost in crossing Lake Champlain, which was frozen over, and a supply of necessary articles was procured at Boston.

The prince had already taken rank as an organizer, and had in fact promoted one section of army reform at an earlier date than that at which his brother, the Duke of York, commenced his efforts to achieve complete reconstruction of the service, and those endeavours to increase the well-being of the men in the ranks, which had gained for him the name of "the soldier's friend." In the West Indies, where he joined Sir Charles Grey, Edward Augustus entered upon the serious business of a campaign in which he took a prominent part, heading the flank division at the storming of several strong and important forts in Martinique and Guadaloupe, where the commander-in-chief remonstrated with him for his reckless bravery. He was in command of a battalion of grenadiers who disembarked at Marigot des Roseaux, under Vice-Admiral Sir John Jervis (afterwards Earl St. Vincent), for the attack of Morne Fortunée, and who conducted themselves so admirably in that affair, under the

immediate command of his royal highness, as to entitle them to particular notice in the commander-in-chief's despatch. Their leader himself hoisted the British colours on the post, the name of which was changed to "Fort Charlotte" in honour of his mother the Queen. The conquest of the whole island was soon after accomplished without the loss of a single man, though the troops were exposed to a heavy fire from the batteries and works of the enemy. In the following month, at the capture of Guadaloupe, the prince led on the first division, consisting of the first and second battalions of grenadiers and a hundred of the naval battalion, to the attack of the post on Morne Marcot, and he and his companions received the thanks of the English and Irish Parliaments for their distinguished services. In fact the father of our Queen had his full share of the courage for which the line of Hanover-Brunswick has mostly been famous. George the Third is reported to have declared, "All my sons are courageous except one, and him I will not name as he is to succeed me." This is a remarkable example of Georgian reticence, and seems to accord somewhat with the declaration of George the Fourth that he had been at the battle of Waterloo—an assertion so often repeated that, perhaps, the prince had come to believe it, and actually on one occasion appealed to the Duke of Wellington to confirm it. "I was there, wasn't I, Arthur?" "I have often heard your royal highness say so," was the cautious but truthful reply. After the West Indies expedition, Prince Edward was raised to the rank of lieutenant-general and made commander of the forces at Halifax; but his former ill-luck attended him with regard to an expensive outfit, which was the fifth that he lost. The vessel in which it was sent out was, like its predecessor, captured by the French, and the same fate befell two succeeding ones, so that he had lost altogether about the value of £10,000

at the time that he was further promoted to the rank of general and commander-in-chief of the forces in North America. Another vessel had disappeared with his library, maps, plans, and a stock of wine.

In 1798 he returned to England and took up his temporary abode in Kensington Palace, and in the following year, when he was thirty-two years of age, was made Duke of Kent and Strathern and Earl of Dublin. At last he seems to have gained the position which he had deserved, and for which he had so long waited in vain. The king had previously written to him expressing approbation of the whole of his conduct, and after his reception had appointed him to the command of the army of the interior. When he became Duke of Kent he was made commander-in-chief of the English forces in North America and Lieutenant-governor of Nova Scotia.

After this he was closely engaged in official work, and had some expectation of having command of the troops in Ireland, the union having been then nearly completed. He was again called to England, partly because he was in ill-health and partly by desire of the King, with whom he stayed for some time at Weymouth. In 1802 he went out as governor to Gibraltar, where the garrison had become so disorganized that his efforts to restore discipline resulted in an attempted mutiny, and it was said that a plot for seizing him when he was on parade, and flinging him from the Rock, was frustrated by a whispered warning given to the duke, while he was visiting the hospital, by a soldier who lay there dying from the effects of a long course of intemperance. Whether this was the chief cause of the recall of the duke or not need not be discussed,—but no sooner had he succeeded in restoring order than he was ordered to leave the command in the hands of the officer next in authority and to

return to England. The order was of course obeyed, but he felt that some explanation should be given of such an unusual proceeding, and on arriving in London he asked for a court-martial to be appointed to inquire into the circumstances. This was refused on the ground that it would not be expedient in the case of an officer of his rank; and consequently he was once more left to feel that he had been subjected to some adverse influence, which in this case was attributed by the public—and it would also seem by the duke himself—to his brother the Duke of York, who was omnipotent at the Horse Guards.

Though the duke had enough troubles of his own, he was always ready to listen to the troubles of others, and to help his friends as far as his duty and his limited influence and limited means would permit. Strict, and even severely punctilious and minutely methodical as he was reputed to be in his military capacity and in the ordering of his establishment, he had a loyal and tender heart and an affectionate nature. That his influence was comparatively small, so far as any military or government patronage was concerned, may be well imagined from the manner in which his own requests were received or rather rejected, and his own money difficulties prevented him from exercising to the full his generous disposition.

It cannot be denied that the duke shared to some extent the expansive views of his brothers as to the purchasing power of a sum of money either in hand or in prospect, but it is also certain that he did not share in the money itself. When the King, with a munificence for which he has seldom been fully credited, made very large presents to his sons from the balance which came to him from prize-money, the Duke of Kent had the smallest portion; and yet when he applied to Pitt to bring before Parliament his claims for losses incurred through no fault

of his own, but in the public service and in consequence of delay in the settlement of his "parliamentary establishment," he took the opportunity of representing that the allowances of his younger brothers were insufficient for the position those princes were expected to maintain.

The death of Mr. Pitt soon afterwards, though it did not prevent an increase in the allowances of the younger brothers, left the promises of the minister to the Duke of Kent unfulfilled. The consequence was that the engagements which he had made with creditors, on the assurance that his claims would be considered, and in the conviction that their justice would be acknowledged, could not be fulfilled, and he had to arrange with trustees to devote half his income for the extinction of his debts. It will be enough to say that neither then, nor at a later date, when, as a husband and a father, he might "reasonably" (that is, without an appeal to sentiment) have expected some consideration, did he receive any aid either from the government or from his brother the Regent, whose demands, added to the less alarming but still excessive expectations of the Duke of York, exhausted the supplies to be obtained from Parliament. As we are referring for a moment to this later period (1819), when the duke was driven to offer his house at Castlebar (valued at £51,000) for sale, it may be interesting to note that Mr. Hume, the sworn foe to extravagance, but at the same time the sworn foe to injustice, stood up for him to the extent of showing that if, in respect of parliamentary allowance, he was placed on the same footing as the Duke of Clarence he would have to receive £96,000, and if on a footing with the Duke of Sussex £29,000.

Though we may not linger upon these preliminary pages, they are of some importance in what purports to be a really

intelligible narrative of the life of our gracious and beloved Queen, for they show what were the conditions against which her noble and excellent father had to contend, and they will explain the unobtrusive but truly dignified conduct of the widowed duchess, who, in the quiet seclusion of her home, devoted herself to the loving care which should make the best attributes of childhood and of womanhood the foundation for the character of Princess and of Sovereign.

Without projecting the faintest shadow of politics upon the page it may be permissible to say that the fact of the Duke of Kent having decidedly taken the "Liberal" side, so far as he entered upon political questions, was not likely to have advanced his interests, the very pronounced Liberalism of the Duke of Sussex having perhaps emphasized the profession of any such opinions in other members of the family. Thus we find the Duke of Kent speaking at a banquet in response for the toast of the royal family, and saying, "I am a friend of civil and religious liberty all the world over. I am an enemy to all religious tests. I am a supporter of a general system of education. All men are my brethren; and I hold that power is delegated only for the benefit of the people. These are the principles of myself and my beloved brother the Duke of Sussex. They are not popular principles just now. That is, they do not conduct to place or office. *All* the members of the royal family do not hold the same principles. For this I do not blame them; but we claim for ourselves the right of thinking, and acting as we think best." These were broad sentiments, and by no means likely to be palatable either to the King, the Duke of York, or the Duke of Cumberland, who were dead against such sentiments and against the removal of political disabilities from the Roman Catholics. Doubtless the Duke of Kent had the courage

of his convictions. At the same time it should be remembered that the *practical* political "Liberalism" of the Duke of Kent so far as he entered upon political matters at all, might now probably be regarded as resembling what has been called democratic Toryism. As a matter of fact, however, he would not have anything to do with pronounced politics. The royal dukes were rather given to "orating" in or out of the House of Lords, and the Duke of Sussex was always good for presiding somewhere or other, especially at charity and other dinners, or meetings for promoting philanthropic objects, while his position as grand-master of freemasonry possibly gave to his addresses the peculiar effect which is supposed to belong to the utterances that distinguish the occupants of "the chair of King Solomon." The Duke of Kent, however, though he was amiably willing to preside at anniversary festivals and assemblies for promoting benevolent objects, and though his good-nature, easy eloquence, and imposing appearance, in addition to his royal rank, made him a model chairman, and led to his having to work harder than he would have done "in his place" in the Upper House, chiefly confined his speaking in public to such kindly efforts. He had enough of family opposition without exasperating it by party debate, for which he had no inclination. He wrote to Lord Eldon respecting attendance in Parliament, reminding him of a conversation on the day of the opening of the session, in which he had said he would always be ready to attend the House of Peers whenever he had the slightest direct intimation that his presence was wished for. "In doing this," he added, "I am anxious your lordship should understand that I am actuated by that principle I have ever professed of supporting the King's government, and never taking any part in political disputes, for which I have the

utmost abhorrence, and, indeed, am less fit than any other member of our house, having never given my attention to any other pursuit but that of my own profession."

The necessity for his acting with constant precaution in relation to public affairs soon became apparent, for he was now raised to the rank of field-marshal, and yet his position in the royal family made it very difficult for him to avoid being personally implicated in the scandals which were then exciting public attention. Charges of receiving bribes had been brought against the Duke of York, and these accusations, as well as the conduct of the Prince Regent in insisting on a separation from his wife the Princess Caroline, affected all the members of the royal family in different ways, so that it was exceedingly difficult to maintain a neutral position. To add to these embarrassments, just before the inquiry into the allegations made against the Duke of York, pamphlets were published professing to defend the Duke of Kent against the persecution and neglect to which it was stated he had been subjected by his brother. He had nothing whatever to do with these publications, and he went to the House of Lords to assure their lordships that there was no animosity between him and his brother, that all reports to the contrary were unfounded and untrue, and that he was fully persuaded that all the charges made against his brother were false, and would be proved to be without foundation.

From the allegations made against the Princess Caroline and the so-called "investigations" instituted by her husband the Prince Regent, he was less able to hold aloof, and such part as he took in that miserable business ended in his incurring the resentment both of the Prince and of the unfortunate but most indiscreet and incorrigibly flighty Princess, who had intrusted to the Rev. Dr. Randolph to take with him to Germany a packet

of letters, which he protested he had sent back to her, declining to be responsible for conveying them. They were either intentionally intercepted or by some means fell into the hands of some one who took them to Queen Charlotte, and as they were full of strong expressions and some injurious representations with regard to almost every member of the royal family who was then at court, they contributed not a little to increase the aversion felt by many relatives of the Prince to the misguided woman who had written them. The whole transaction was discreditable to both sides, and of course the letters should not have been conveyed to the court, and should not have been read by those who complained of their aspersions. The Duke of Kent had not seen and would not receive them. He afterwards wrote a precise memorandum in which he said, "These letters (most unhappily for the writer) fell into hands for which most certainly they were never intended. I have not seen them myself. I never would see them, nor allow them to come into my possession (though they have been more than once offered for my inspection) for various reasons, among them a conviction that their being in existence at all, and certainly in the hands of the parties who held them, was a breach of that honourable confidence which ought to actuate all persons in matters where private correspondence is concerned." It is evident that the duke was not at all the kind of man for exercising the "diplomacy" necessary for promoting the ambitions of the Prince Regent, who had already been offended with him for having used his influence to prevent a scandal being made of a former "anonymous letter and a drawing" which had been attributed to the Princess, and had also got into mischievous hands.

The conduct of the duke, however, appeared to be that of an honourable and an amiable man, and it is not surprising that the

Regent afterwards asked him to take some trouble in reference to the disputes which had already arisen with the Princess Charlotte.

Finding that nothing would be done to bring his claims before the House of Commons, and that he had little to hope from the Prince Regent, whose lavish expenditure had set so ill an example to his brothers, and who, now that he was in royal authority, because of the condition of the aged King, was little likely to abate his demands on the public purse, the duke retired to Brussels. There he took up his residence, occasionally travelling on visits to Germany, where he had several friends, doubtless included among the numerous correspondents who kept him so extensively employed that he had to engage a secretary and a couple of sergeants of his regiment who acted as clerks. This business of letter-writing had grown upon the duke in consequence of his readiness to interest himself in the affairs of everybody who sought his counsel or patronage. He was accessible to almost anyone who needed his aid and had any reasonable plea for his assistance, and it may therefore be easily imagined that he was always communicating with one or other of the public departments, forwarding petitions, and seeking favourable consideration for people who sought redress or asked for appointments.

At that time (1816) the King had been for six years in permanent seclusion, and there was no hope of his recovery. In 1789 he had been obliged to retire from all public life for three months; but the cloud which then obscured his mental faculties passed away, and he had, with his family, attended at Saint Paul's Cathedral to give thanks for his restoration to health. In 1809, twenty years afterwards, commenced the fiftieth year of his Majesty's reign, and the event had been

observed as a public festival, with many appropriate celebrations. In the following year, however, there was a return of the malady from which he had previously suffered.

The death of his favourite and youngest daughter the Princess Amelia had greatly affected him, and it became evident that his condition at such an advanced age was too serious to allow any sanguine hopes of his recovery. To the Duke of York was intrusted the personal care of the sovereign, and the Prince of Wales, who was appointed Regent, practically succeeded to the throne, and assumed the rights of royalty, with the consent, though it can scarcely be said with the hearty concurrence, of the people, a large proportion of whom regarded him with a dislike not far removed from contempt. This was partly caused by the self-indulgent and dissolute life that he had led, and by his enormous extravagances, which had resulted in frequent appeals to the public purse,—but all the ill-will which was manifested towards him had been accentuated by his unhappy relations with his wife, from whom he had separated in 1796, almost immediately after the birth of a daughter, who became next in succession to the throne. George the Third, who constantly protected the unhappy Caroline, took charge of the young princess, and the mother retired to a private residence at Blackheath, and when in London occupied a house in Connaught Place, facing Hyde Park. When the King's condition became hopeless the child was placed under the care of the Queen, who, it is to be feared, was not over-kind to her, and only allowed her mother to see her once a week.

With the miserable and unedifying story of the Regent and his unhappy Princess—especially with its later episodes when he became King and her alleged wrongs led to popular tumults—we need not here be concerned. It is necessary,

however, to refer as briefly as may be to her daughter, the Princess Charlotte, for whom, as she grew older, there was manifested by the nation a deep and almost passionate regard, which owed much of its strength to the very opposite feeling with which her father was greeted, especially as there was a general conviction that he was treating her with indifference and neglect, if not with actual cruelty and oppression. These suspicions were not without foundation. The Prince Regent cared chiefly for his own selfish ease and amusements. His child knew nothing of parental affection, and had never had any of the care and happiness that belongs to true home life, nor the moral developments that come of close and generous friendships in early youth. Before she had reached womanhood she had learned to pity and to excuse, if not to defend, much that was blameworthy in her mother's conduct. Her very deep sense of justice added to a genuinely affectionate disposition and a yearning for affection in return caused her to side with her mother, and may have had much to do with the strong opposition to her father's imperious orders which she sometimes manifested. One sentence—a remark which she made at a rather later date to Baron Stockmar (of whom we shall see more presently)—is vastly significant of the decided impression which she had formed and of the injurious circumstances amidst which she must have been placed. "My mother was bad, but she would not have become as bad as she was if my father had not been infinitely worse:"—a terrible sentence, look at it how we may.

The Princess Charlotte possessed admirable and some noble qualities, such as were well calculated to make the people idolize her, and abundantly to justify the enthusiasm with which her name was mentioned, although she was allowed few oppor-

tunities of appearing in public in such a way as to call forth regular expressions of loyalty. She grew to be a handsome woman, above the ordinary height, with a fine figure, an expansive and genial beauty, manners frank, vivacious, and sometimes unconventional enough to give a kind of charm to her conversation with those whom she liked. There was an occasional caprice almost approaching to flightiness, which, however, was corrected by her frank good-humour and her modest dress and decorous though rather careless demeanour. Her great characteristic seems to have been a deeply-loving nature and a very amiable and charitable temper, amidst much that was wilful and wayward in her conduct. She needed the guidance of true, strong, and one might add sedate affection, and this she found but for one happy year—the last year of her earthly life.

When she was sixteen a separate town residence was provided for her at Warwick House, near her father's palace of Carlton House, and there or at Windsor she lived among comparative strangers with her governess, and for companion Miss Cornelia Knight, who afterwards wrote an account of the life that was led there. She was only allowed to see her mother once a fortnight, and for the next three years her experiences may be inferred from the fact that at seventeen she had not been confirmed—which was then considered to be a very serious negligence for a girl of that age. Neither had she appeared at court, which, considering what the court was, perhaps places some small grain of credit to the account of her father, if his motive was a higher one than to save himself trouble and responsibility. His conduct towards her was summed up in the directions he gave to Miss Knight: "Remember that Charlotte must lay aside the idle nonsense of thinking that she has a will of her own: while I live she

must be subjected to me, as she is at present, if she were thirty, or forty, or forty-five." This may seem to show that he had already been made to feel that she had a will of her own and might unexpectedly exercise it, and she did exercise it when, at eighteen, an offer of marriage was made by the Prince of Orange, who afterwards became King William the Second of the Netherlands.

The Prince Regent saw that here was an opportunity of getting rid of a great responsibility, and therefore he consented with alacrity to the proposed alliance, and so hurried on the engagement that the princess was betrothed almost before she was aware of it, although on her first meeting with the Prince of Orange she was not very favourably impressed either with his manners or appearance. It would seem that she immediately began to insist on conditions, the discussion of which would delay the marriage, and she was supported in her demands by the "opposition" in Parliament and by her mother, to whom the Prince of Orange had already shown himself to be inimical.

So strongly did the Regent endeavour to overcome her objections to leave England and take up her residence in Holland for a considerable part of each year, that he was suspected of indifference to her succession to the throne; and it may well be imagined that the influence of the Duke of Cumberland was in this direction, since—as after events proved—he was alive to the possibility of his own claims being put forward if the salique law observed in Hanover could be established in England.

The princess soon showed that she could be as determined as her father or as either of the royal dukes, and so persisted in her objections to a foreign residence that the marriage was delayed.

On the 7th of June, 1814, the allied sovereigns and their victorious generals visited London, and were sumptuously entertained by the Prince Regent, who at the same time refused to allow his wife to be present at the court festivities, from which his daughter was also excluded. This prohibition increased the indignation of the Princess Charlotte, who saw in it a deliberate design to injure the reputation of her mother in the opinion of the royal and imperial guests, and her resentment was excited by the conduct of her affianced husband, who, with an utter disregard of her sentiments, attended the assemblies from which she had been peremptorily banished.

She now demanded not only that she should remain in England immediately after the marriage, but that her future home should be open to the visits of her mother, and as the intended bridegroom refused his consent to such an arrangement she distinctly told him that the marriage was impossible, and he accepted the decision with so little emotion that it was evident not much love had been lost on either side. The Prince Regent was in a fury, and characteristically went to Warwick House, suddenly dismissed the household of the princess on the ground that they had connived at her disobedience, and commanded her at once to prepare to go to Cranbourne Lodge at Windsor, where, as she well knew, she would be kept in seclusion, and under the espionage of strangers. When it was supposed she was preparing for the journey, she stole out of the house and entered a hackney-coach, in which she drove to her mother's house in Connaught Place.

There was a great commotion when her flight was discovered. The Regent was baffled, and had to send to the Duke of York and others to assist him in bringing back the princess. The Duke of Sussex was out at a dinner-party when a hastily-scribbled note

from his niece was put into his hand. She implored him to protect her, and said she had sought refuge with her mother. Without waiting to find his carriage he had a hackney-coach called, and drove off to Connaught Place. Hackney-coaches were in remarkable request that evening for the conveyance of distinguished passengers to the same destination. When the duke arrived he found Mr. Henry Brougham there. This rising advocate was already employed as the legal adviser of the Princess of Wales. When the duke heard who he was, he turned to him and asked, "Pray, sir, supposing that the Prince Regent, acting in the name and on behalf of His Majesty, were to send a sufficient force to break open the doors of the house and carry away the princess, would resistance in such a case be lawful?" Brougham replied that it would not. "Then, my dear," said the duke to his niece, "you hear what the law is, and I can only advise you to return with as much speed and as little noise as possible." The princess was now inclined to yield. Her mother joined in urging her to show obedience to her father. When the Duke of Sussex left the house he found the lord chancellor and two chief-justices in a coach together, waiting to be admitted. In another coach came the Duke of York, and eventually he persuaded the princess to return with him to Warwick House.

The end of it was that she stayed for a few days at Carlton House with her father, who seems to have shown a less arbitrary temper now that he saw what she might dare if driven to extremities, and she was afterwards taken to Windsor, all her attendants having been changed. But the marriage was irretrievably broken off—and what was more, she had already seen somebody whom she believed she would love much better than she ever could have loved the Prince of Orange, who two years afterwards married a Russian grand-duchess.

By that time the Princess Charlotte had married that somebody else. No other, indeed, than Prince Leopold of Coburg, a man whose bereavement by her death after a year of happy conjugal affection was deeply felt by the whole nation, and whose noble qualities, solid acquirements, and sincere character gave him a distinguished place in the councils of Europe for many years afterwards, when he had by general consent been elected to the throne of Belgium.

Prince Leopold was directly descended from the old and noble house of the great Elector of Saxony, Frederic the Wise. This elder, or as it was called the Ernestine, branch of the great Saxon family was represented by the owners of various duchies, which were acquired after the electorate had passed to the younger or Albertine branch of the family in consequence of devotion of the elder family to the Protestant religion. Frederic the Wise, Elector of Saxony, the friend and protector of Martin Luther, was powerful enough to hold his own, but the defeat of John Frederic by the Emperor Charles the Fifth, in 1547, changed the succession to the younger branch, the treacherous Maurice having deserted the Reformed faith, and thus secured elevation to the electorate. At the death of the great grandson of Frederic the Wise,—Ernest the Pious, Duke of Saxe-Coburg-Gotha-Coburg,—the several duchies acquired by the family and now possessed by his descendants were divided. They included the dukedoms of Saxe-Gotha-Altenburg, of Saxe-Meiningen (the family of the Princess Adelaide, consort of William the Fourth), of Saxe-Hildburghausen, and Saxe-Coburg-Saalfeld. Of these, Saxe-Gotha-Altenburg went to the eldest son, Frederic; and Saxe-Coburg-Saalfeld[1] to the youngest,

[1] By subsequent family arrangements as to succession he took the Duchy of Gotha and surrendered that of Saalfeld to the Duke of Meiningen.

John Ernest, the ancestor of Ernest the First, eldest brother of Leopold and, as we shall see hereafter, father of Prince Albert.

This Duke Ernest was eldest son of Duke Francis and of a very clever and sensible woman, Augusta, daughter of Prince Henry the Twenty-fourth of Reuss-Ebersdorff. He had succeeded to the dukedom in 1806 when it was in the occupation of the French, from which it was not set free till 1813. The second son was Ferdinand George, who married the Princess Kohary of Hungary, and whose son married Donna Maria the Second, Queen of Portugal. Prince Leopold was the third son, and with him we are more concerned. There were four daughters: Sophia married Count Mensdorff Pouilly, who left France at the Revolution and obtained a high position in the Austrian service, his son, Count Alexander Mensdorff, having been well known at a much later date as Austrian minister of foreign affairs; Antoinette, the second daughter, married Duke Alexander of Wurtemburg; Julie, the third daughter, the Grand-duke Constantine of Russia, from whom she separated in 1802, taking up her residence in Switzerland; Victoria Marie Louise, the youngest daughter, had been married to Emich Charles, Prince of Leiningen, and had (in 1813) been left a widow with two children, a son and a daughter, to whom, though she was still a young, handsome, and accomplished woman, she devoted herself with maternal care and affection.

Prince Leopold was distinguished even in a distinguished family for a remarkable personal charm—keen intellect, much tact, and courtesy of manner, the sagacity which includes a knowledge of men and enables its possessor to estimate character, and a fine sense of humour. His "record" was clear as to character and conduct, and he was just one of those men who are not only generally attractive, but who command esteem and

regard. To the temperate blood, sound brain, and habitual self-possession of the Coburg family he added a wisdom and consistency of conduct which is usually only the result of age and experience. In England he was popular almost immediately that he became known. His characteristics were those that the English appreciate, and rightly or wrongly claim for themselves. The highest praise they could give him was—"What a complete English gentleman!" He had, however, had some experience, for at fifteen he had entered the Russian army, just before the battle of Austerlitz; and though there were some family disagreements with the Grand-duke Constantine—he did not sever his connection with the imperial court, but in 1813 was the first German prince who joined the Russian army for the liberation of Germany, and was on Constantine's staff. He had visited Napoleon at Paris in 1807, and was at the Congress of Erfurt in 1808. He was a successful negotiator at the Congress of Vienna, and in 1815, at Paris, obtained an increase of territory for his brother the Duke of Coburg. In the previous year (1814), he also was one of the honoured guests who came to England, and were magnificently received at Carlton House. Though the Princess Charlotte was excluded from these superb gatherings, she had met Leopold, and was anxious to become better acquainted with him. She confided her wishes to her aunt, the Duchess of York (the Princess Frederica of Prussia, daughter of Frederick William the Third), who, knowing that there would otherwise be great difficulty in bringing these young people together, promised to give a ball for her, and to invite the prince. This was done, and it need scarcely be said that the meeting, at which there was soon a mutual understanding, sealed the fate of the proposed Orange marriage. It was a critical position for Prince Leopold, and the Prince Regent was

at first inclined to oppose him, especially as it had been represented that he had taken means to supersede the Prince of Orange; but his invincible amiability and patient good sense, no less than his admirable manners, actually won over the Regent. The Duke of York as well as the Duke of Kent were generally favourable to the suit, and the marriage was afterwards arranged, though for some time after Leopold had left England, in 1814, the whole matter seemed to be doubtful, and but for the kindly Duke of Kent, who enabled the lovers to correspond, the difficulties might have become insuperable. In January, 1816, however, Leopold received an invitation to return to England, and the marriage took place amidst the congratulations and rejoicings of the nation, who regarded the wedded pair with the utmost delight and complacency.

When Prince Leopold arrived in England he stayed first at Brighton and there awaited the arrival of Christian Frederick Stockmar, whom he had appointed to be his physician, but who afterwards became his confidential secretary and most faithful and trusted companion. Stockmar, who subsequently received the title of baron and whose name has been associated with many of the events relating to the early life of our Queen, was a very remarkable man,—remarkable not only because of his undoubted ability and accomplishments, but for a sincerity and integrity which was never known to fail. His self-devotion led him to give up family ties, many personal ambitions, and much prospect of ease and comfort, in the service of the prince, for whom he had the greatest esteem and affection.

There is a peculiar self-effacement by which some men of keen perceptions, an intense sense of humour, and yet with an undercurrent of melancholy, apparently keep themselves in the background, at the same time experiencing deep self-satisfaction

in the notion that they are exercising a powerful influence on those about them by their advice and the results of their observations. Stockmar had something of this quality, and undoubtedly possessed a remarkable talent for what is called "reckoning people up." As a politician or as a theoretical statesman, and as one who had more than usual opportunities of observing and associating with ministers and leaders of opinion, he set himself to diagnose character as unhesitatingly as he would, in his capacity of physician, have diagnosed disease. He had been educated at the Coburg Gymnasium and at Wurzburg, Erlangen, and Jena. In the period of the war dating from 1812 he became "town and country physician" at Coburg, where he had been practising medicine, and there he organized a military hospital. In January, 1814, and again in 1815 he had as physician accompanied the Saxon ducal contingent to the Rhine, and in the latter year into Alsace. In that campaign Prince Leopold had become acquainted with him, and such was their mutual regard that when the marriage of the prince with Princess Charlotte was settled, Stockmar received and accepted the offer of the appointment of physician in ordinary to the prince, whom he followed to England on the 29th of March, 1816.

As an example of the manner in which he would by a few vivid touches of description indicate his impressions of important people whom he met we may quote from his diary (not at the time of course intended for any eye but his own) his remarks on some members of the royal family. Of the Regent he wrote: "Very stout, though of a fine figure; distinguished manners; does not talk half as much as his brothers; speaks tolerably good French. He ate and drank a good deal at dinner. His brown scratch-wig not particularly becoming." The Duke of

York was "tall, with immense *embonpoint*, and not proportionately strong legs; he holds himself in such a way that one is always afraid he will tumble over backwards; very bald, and not a very intelligent face. . . . Spoke a good deal of French with a bad accent." The Duchess of York, daughter of Frederick William the Second of Prussia, is described as "a little, animated woman; talks immensely and laughs still more. No beauty; mouth and teeth bad. She disfigures herself still more by distorting her mouth and blinking her eyes. In spite of the duke's various infidelities their matrimonial relations are good. She is quite aware of her husband's embarrassed circumstances, and is his prime minister and truest friend, so that nothing is done without her help. As soon as she entered the room she looked round for the banker, Greenwood, who immediately came up to her with the confidentially familiar manner which the wealthy go-between assumes towards grand people in embarrassed circumstances." The Duke of York had married the Princess Frederica Charlotte Ulrica, Princess Royal of Prussia, in September, 1791, when he was twenty-eight and she was twenty-four years old, and the portion of £30,000 which she was said to have received from her father was probably a considerable attraction; whether the promise which the Prussian monarch was said to have made, also to pay the duke's debts to the amount of £20,000, was an expression of satisfaction at his daughter's marriage need not be discussed, but it is declared that on the marriage being settled he said to her, "Ma fille vous avez attendu longtemps, mais vous avez tirée le gros lot."

Of the Duke of Clarence, afterwards King William the Fourth, Stockmar wrote: "The smallest and least good-looking of the brothers (he must have meant the elder brothers), decidedly like his mother, as talkative as the rest." But the

observation on the Duke of Kent is in accordance with the known character of that prince: "The quietest of all the dukes I have seen, talks slowly and deliberately, is kind and courteous." A very different estimate to that given of Ernest, Duke of Cumberland: "A tall, powerful man, with a hideous face; can't see two inches before him; one eye turned quite out of its place." This duke had in 1814 married his cousin, Frederica Caroline Sophia of Mecklenburg-Strelitz, who had been twice previously married; first to Prince Frederick of Prussia, and secondly to the Prince of Salms-Braunsch, from whom she had been divorced.

The Duke of Sussex did not at this time come within the diagnosis of physician Stockmar. He was living quietly, rather as an English nobleman than as a prince of the royal family. As we have seen he was an avowed Liberal; and he was probably the most really cultivated of all the royal dukes, his extensive library at Kensington Palace containing many rare books, and especially a fine collection of Bibles and ancient manuscripts, for he was a student of Biblical literature. He, like some of his brothers, was a great smoker, and possessed a remarkable collection of meerschaum and other pipes, some of them of considerable value. Another characteristic was a liking for rather handsome attire, especially gorgeous dressing-gowns. One can scarcely think of the Duke of Sussex in this regard without associating some of his peculiarities with his experiences in freemasonry. There may have been much in masonic ceremonies and decorations to account for a few of his ways.

The Duke of Sussex, while in Italy, when he was only a youth of nineteen, had fallen distractedly in love with Lady Augusta Murray, daughter of the Earl of Dunmore, a governor of one of the American provinces. The lady was staying in

Rome with her mother, and so vehemently did the prince urge his suit that, unknown to the mother, the young people were married by an English clergyman there. In the winter the whole party returned to England, and the ceremony was repeated, the duke figuring as Mr. Frederick. It was a love-match, and the lady was of high lineage, descended in fact from the same royal lines as the duke himself; but the union was pronounced to be void, and was set aside by the King, under the terms of the Royal Marriage Act of 1773, which made the marriage of any descendant of George the Second under twenty-five and without the King's consent absolutely null and void.

Of the youngest of the royal princes—Adolphus Frederick, Duke of Cambridge—Stockmar wrote: "A good-looking man with a blonde wig. Speaks French and German very well, but, like English, with such rapidity that he carries off the palm in the family art." He was a popular prince in many respects, and deservedly so, for he was a pleasant and good-natured man, unpretentious, quiet, and reputable in his conduct, had served in Flanders not without distinction, was a ready patron of movements intended to ameliorate the condition of the poor, and was not only a promoter of the art of music and of musical education, but was a very good singer. At the time of the wedding of the Princess Charlotte he was unmarried, but in May, 1818, was united to Wilhelmina Louisa, youngest daughter of the Landgrave of Hesse-Cassell. In 1814 he had been appointed governor of Hanover, and held that position till 1839, when, on the death of William the Fourth, the Duke of Cumberland succeeded to the Hanoverian throne.

Of the surviving daughters of George the Third (one, as we have seen, had died in 1810) two were married—the elder to the King of Wurtemburg; the Princess Elizabeth (third daughter)

to the Landgrave of Hesse; the Princess Augusta (the second daughter) remained unmarried. The fourth daughter, Princess Mary, was then unmarried, but in 1816 married her cousin the Duke of Gloucester, son of the brother of the King, and a prince who was usually regarded as deficient in intelligence, and decidedly was somewhat of a cipher, but quiet and inoffensive, and capable of very genuine friendship. The Princess Sophia, the younger daughter of George the Third, was unmarried.

There had been no children of the marriages, and therefore intense interest was manifested in the Princess Charlotte, and in her approaching alliance with Prince Leopold. The union seemed in most respects to promise great happiness, for the young couple thoroughly understood each other, and were mutually devoted.

On the 2d of May, 1816, they were married, and immediately afterwards went to the Duke of York's residence at Oatlands, returning in a few days for the London season, during which they remained at Camelford House, Park Lane, afterwards going to reside permanently at the prince's own beautiful house at Claremont, near Esher, which had been purchased for them by the government for £69,000.

Stockmar, though he was only one of the chief officers of the simple household (which, besides himself, consisted of Mrs. Campbell, lady-in-waiting to the princess, and three gentlemen equerries or aides-de-camp), was in so confidential a position that he could well estimate the happy relations of the prince and princess. "In this house reign harmony, peace, and love," he wrote in October, 1816; "in short, everything that can promote domestic happiness. My master is the best of all husbands in all the five quarters of the globe, and his wife bears him an amount of love, the greatness of which can only be compared

with the English national debt." Ten months afterwards: "The married life of this couple affords a rare picture of love and fidelity, and never fails to impress all spectators who have managed to preserve a particle of feeling."

Alas! a shadow was gathering over that abode of mutual affection—the curtain of death was to be drawn across the picture. The princess was about to become a mother, and the event was looked forward to with anxiety, not only by all England but by foreign nations. There appeared to be no reason for apprehension: all was apparently going well. Stockmar had firmly and wisely enough refused to undertake any responsibility, or to attend the princess even as resident physician, and the result showed that it was prudent for him as a foreigner to abstain from interference. The physician in ordinary was the famous Dr. Baillie; Sir Richard Croft was accoucheur. In those days a good deal of medical treatment consisted of depletion,—bleeding, cupping, and means for lowering the system were considered necessary in cases where quite a different course would now be pursued. The strength of the princess had, it was said, been greatly diminished. The period of suffering before the birth of her child was unusually protracted: the ministers, the Archbishop of Canterbury, and other important personages had assembled at the house awaiting the result. A male child was born, but born dead. It was a terrible disappointment, but the prince bore it with resignation, and, worn out with long watching by his wife, retired to rest, the princess appearing to be well and free from pain. At midnight Stockmar was awakened by Sir Richard Croft coming to his bedside, and begging him to inform the prince that the patient was in a dangerous condition. Two hours afterwards, at two o'clock in the morning of the 6th of November, 1817, the

dead mother lay beside the dead child; and the husband, broken down with grief, felt as though his life had been wrecked and there would be no more joy for him in the world.

The terrible event caused profound grief throughout the nation. The country was in mourning, and was pervaded by a sense of gloom, amidst which sinister accusations against the Regent and Queen Charlotte found extravagant expression. The unfeeling conduct of the father, and the dislike and harshness manifested towards the princess by the Queen, were bitterly remembered, and suspicions of neglect, and worse than neglect, were first whispered, and afterwards more openly disseminated.

They were entirely without foundation, for the princess had been under the unceasing care of a devoted husband; and apart from the question of the erroneous medical practice of the time, no immediate responsibility could be placed upon anyone in attendance upon her. But the calamity was so awfully sudden and unexpected that people sought for some further explanation than was to be found in mistaken treatment. This state of public feeling was painfully increased by the suicide of Sir Richard Croft, whose mind had been so affected that he was in a state bordering on insanity. He could not endure the grief and anxiety which, added to the conviction that he was the object of public denunciation, overthrew his reason, and while attending the wife of a clergyman, whose condition seemed somewhat to resemble that which preceded the death of the princess, he shot himself with a pistol which he found in the room that he occupied in the house.

The Duke of Kent was still in Brussels, where he had been completing the stables and gardens of a mansion which he had obtained for his residence. He was now fifty years of age; but his manner of living had been different to that of his elder brothers,

and as compared with them he was still in his prime. In one of his visits to Germany he had met the youngest sister of Prince Leopold—the Princess Victoire (Victoria) Maria Louisa—widow of the Prince of Leiningen, who with her two children lived at Amorbach in Bavaria, in a residence assigned to her as princess-dowager. The princess was but thirty years old, her husband having been much her senior. She had now been for four years a widow, with a son, Charles Emich, Prince of Leiningen, about twelve, and a daughter, Anna Feodora, about nine years of age.

The duke, a man of handsome presence, courteous and most kind and attractive manners, and with accomplishments which give distinction even to princes, had probably soon won the regard of this lady, as her singularly engaging appearance, amiable and unselfish disposition, and admirable character, had certainly secured his affection. Stockmar in his journal recorded that she was of middle height, with a good figure; fine brown eyes and hair, fresh and youthful; naturally cheerful and friendly, most charming and attractive; naturally truthful, affectionate, unselfish, full of sympathy and generous. This is a description which might seem to derive some eulogy from the language of a courtier; but Stockmar was no courtier, and wrote in his diary only what he had reason to believe of the sister of his beloved Prince Leopold. His estimate of the mother of our Queen was verified by the long and consistent life of that gracious lady, who, by the characteristics here attributed to her, and by her gentleness and patience, overcame the prejudices and innumerable difficulties which awaited her on her arrival in England.

The Princess Charlotte, heiress to the throne, was dead. The Prince Regent was separated from his wife, from whom he desired to be divorced. The Duke of York had no children.

There was none to succeed the princess in relation to the future accession to the throne. The regular life of the Duke of Kent had made it probable that he would survive his elder brothers. It was not surprising therefore, that after receiving the sad intelligence of the death of his niece, which greatly affected him, he should consider what would be its political result, and make definite arrangements for his marriage, which took place on the 29th of May in the following year (1818) at Coburg, where it was solemnized according to the rites of the Lutheran Church. It was necessary, however, that, in accordance with the Royal Marriage Act, the ceremony should be performed in England, and on the 11th of July two royal weddings took place at Kew, for William, Duke of Clarence (afterwards William the Fourth), at same time took to himself a wife—the Princess Adelaide of Saxe-Meiningen. Queen Charlotte, full of years and full of cares—for the husband with whom she had spent a long life was already dead to the world, almost dead to sense, and to mental as well as physical light—exerted herself to be present. It was the last time that she was able to appear at any ceremonial observance, and she died shortly afterwards. The Prince Regent had so far relented as to give away both brides, and after the ceremony had been performed by the Archbishop of Canterbury and the Bishop of London, and the Queen had retired, he presided at a grand banquet in honour of the occasion. The comfort of the happy re-married pair had been cared for by the bereaved Prince Leopold, and in his carriage they drove to Claremont House, where they were to stay for a time before returning to Germany to take up their residence at the house of the duchess at Amorbach.

The duke was an "amiable, courteous, and even chivalrous husband" (to quote Stockmar again), and the marriage was an



eminently happy one; but his financial embarrassments continued, and he could neither obtain a settlement of them, nor any adequate assistance from the government or from his brothers, the Regent acting as though the superficial reconciliation implied by his having given away the bride should be regarded as sufficient concession to compensate for any lack of further interest.

The Castle of Amorbach was part of the inheritance of the young prince, the son of the duchess; and she had, upon her marriage, relinquished an annuity which had been paid her as dowager, and amounted to about £5000 a-year. The want of money was pressing, and as time went on became serious, for it was the earnest desire of the duke that the child which he had reason to expect, should be born in England, the country over which he had a strong conviction either he or his offspring would one day be called to reign. The duchess, however, was prevented from making the journey, because of the want of means to pay the expenses, until some private friends of the duke in England proffered their aid. It may be interesting to know that these friends were Alderman Wood and Lord Darnley, the trustees who received the revenues of the Duke of Kent in trust for his creditors when he retired to Brussels, and received only a small amount of his income. His liberal politics had prevented him from enjoying the advantages of office conferred on other members of the royal family, and yet his debts were not to be compared with those of the Duke of York. When Alderman Sir Matthew Wood heard of the situation of the duchess, he wrote to the duke at Brussels to suggest his removing to England. The duke replied that a considerable sum would be necessary to defray the expenses; and as no funds were in hand, the alderman suggested to Lord

Darnley that they two should execute a personal bond to Messrs. Coutts, the bankers, for an advance to the duke, they taking their chance of his living long enough for them to be repaid out of income. By these means the duke and duchess were enabled to reach England, and it may be added that the advance was only just repaid at the time of the duke's premature death.[1] Knowing how anxious our gracious Sovereign was at the commencement of her reign not only to meet all the obligations contracted by her father, but also to acknowledge the aid which he had received, it is not surprising that the well-known alderman (a Liberal in more than one aspect) received a baronetcy offered him by Lord Melbourne, in accordance with her Majesty's commands. This is a digression, but it is not out of place.

Having obtained this friendly aid, at a time when further delay would have made the journey impossible (it already involved some risk), the duke promptly prepared for the journey to England. It is recorded, and it was eminently characteristic of the man, that feeling reluctant to intrust anybody with the responsibility, he himself drove the carriage in which the duchess travelled for the whole of the journey by land from Amorbach to London, where they arrived early in the month of April, 1819, taking up their residence in Kensington Palace, in which a suite of apartments had been prepared for them.

The rooms occupied by the Duchess of Kent were spacious, and all the more convenient and home-like for not being of too great a height. A room on the first floor at the north-east corner of the palace, and with three windows on one side looking out on the private grounds, was the bed-room, and there the

[1] *Memoir of the Right Hon. William Page Wood, Baron Hatherley.* Edited by his nephew, W. R. W. Stephens, M.A. 1883.

baby who was to be our Queen was born. The adjoining "north drawing-room" was converted into a nursery.

The state apartments of the palace at Kensington during the residence there of the Duchess of Kent and the Princess Victoria consisted of a suite of twelve rooms, approached by the grand staircase, the balconies of which, as already noticed, were painted with groups of figures, including the portraits of the "Turks" who were attendants of George the Second, a figure of "Peter the Wild Boy," and some other celebrities of the time when the work was executed. The state apartments were now used only on extraordinary occasions. The Cubic Room, or grand saloon, where the christening was held, was a showy room, 37 feet square, gaudily decorated and containing gilt mythological statues in marble niches, surmounted by gilt busts; a bust of Cleopatra over the mantel-piece, and a very fine marble sculpture by Rysbrach representing a Roman marriage. The paintings in the galleries and state rooms were numerous, and included a number of historical pictures and family portraits, and several of them had been collected by Queen Caroline, who took particular pleasure in regaining as many as possible of those that had belonged to Charles the First; but many changes had been made, and several of the most remarkable works had been removed to Windsor and Buckingham Palace.

It may be mentioned that the duchess had walked daily in the gardens, and that no ill effects had ensued from the long journey taken at a critical period. In her case, following the Coburg custom, the services of a famous accoucheuse named Charlotte Siebold were secured, the regular medical attendants being in waiting only in case of their advice being required; but all went well, and the ministers and noblemen who had assembled at the palace soon received the announcement of the birth of a

princess. Amongst those present were the Duke of Sussex, the Duke of Wellington, the Archbishop of Canterbury, Lord Lansdowne, the Bishop of London, Mr. George Canning, and Mr. Nicholas Vansittart, afterwards Lord Bexley.

It is no flattery to say that the "new princess" was a beautiful baby. That was the universal conclusion. Even Stockmar said so, and he was not likely to be "carried away" amidst the general delight and congratulation which extended beyond this country, and was equally felt in the old home at Coburg; at the Rosenau, the palace of Duke Ernest (the elder brother of the Duchess of Kent), about four miles from the old town; and at Ketschendorf, the dwelling of their mother, the dear affectionate old dowager-duchess, the grandmother of the little baby-princess at Kensington, who, many years afterwards, could write of her: "The Queen remembers her dear grandmother perfectly well. She was a most remarkable woman, with a most powerful, energetic, almost masculine mind, accompanied with great tenderness of heart and extreme love for nature."

The mother's heart was in the letter that the dowager sent to her daughter, the Duchess of Kent. "I cannot express how happy I am to know you, dearest Vickel, safe in your bed with a little one, and that all went off so happily. May God's blessing rest on the little stranger and the beloved mother! Again a Charlotte, destined, perhaps, to play a great part one day, if a brother is not born to take it out of her hands. The English like queens, and the niece of the ever-lamented, beloved Charlotte will be most dear to them. I need not tell you how delighted everybody is here on hearing of your safe confinement. You know that you are much beloved in this your little home."

A charmingly simple and loving letter, with a truly home-like

tone, just such as might have been expected, for the faithful Siebold having concluded her duties in London had returned to Coburg, and there had described the new-comer in terms that at once suggested to the nature-loving grandmother the sweet and appropriate name of "May-flower" for the princess born in May.

Madame Siebold was wanted at Coburg, for the Duchess Louise was about to present her husband the duke with a second child; and on the 26th of August (1819) at a little before seven in the morning a groom from the Rosenau rode into the court-yard of Ketschendorf to summon the dowager-duchess, bringing the news of the birth of a prince—a prince destined to sustain the closest and dearest relations to his cousin the infant princess then sleeping beside her mother in the room at Kensington. The good news was sent off to the Duchess of Kent by the dear old dowager on the following day. "Rosenau, August 27, 1819. The date will of itself make you suspect that I am sitting by Louischen's bed. . . . . . Siebold, the accoucheuse, had only been called at three, and at six the little one gave his first cry in this world and looked about like a little squirrel. . . . At a quarter to seven I heard the tramp of a horse. It was a groom who brought the joyful news. I was off directly, as you may imagine, and found the little mother slightly exhausted but *gaie et dispos*. She sends you and Edward (the Duke of Kent) a thousand kind messages. . . . The little boy is to be christened to-morrow,[1] and to have the name of Albert. The Emperor of Austria, the old Duke Albert of Saxe-Teschen, the Duke of Gotha, Mensdorff, and I are to be sponsors. Our boys will have the same names as the sons of the Elector Frederic

[1] The event was deferred till the 19th of September, when the baby prince was christened in the marble hall at the Rosenau.

the Mild, who were stolen by Kunz of Kauffengen—namely, Ernest and Albert. . . . How pretty the *May Flower* will be when I see it in a year's time! Siebold cannot sufficiently describe what a dear little love it is. Une bonne fois, adieu! Kiss your husband and children.—AUGUSTA."

Prince Leopold, watchfully kind in the midst of his own sorrow, had come to the aid of his sister and her husband when they needed it, but though he was heartily at one with them he could at present take little or no personal part in the rejoicings. The sorrow that had stricken his life had gone deep, the wounded heart was still bleeding, and he had to find in retirement that resignation and restoration which a man of his character would not seek in vain. "The Prince of Coburg," wrote Bollmann in one of the letters to be found in Varnhagen's reminiscences, "stands out in noble outline before the nation. If he does nothing in the opinion of the public to break the association with their loved princess and remains conspicuously the noble man of blameless life, I believe that further events may make his career a very remarkable one." This forecast was verified indeed, but for several years before it was fulfilled in any manner such as the writer contemplated, the good, sagacious, and accomplished prince had accepted the charge that he believed had devolved on him—that of giving his invaluable aid and counsel in protecting, instructing, and directing the education of the princess who would, he believed, occupy the position which once had been expected for his beloved Charlotte. The child loved him dearly, and spent the happiest days of her somewhat lonesome childhood at the beautiful house at Claremont. On a visit to Coburg, where he went to arrange for a visit of the dowager-duchess to Italy, when the infant Prince Albert was but two years old, the same affection was manifested for him by the little boy, whose

mother wrote: "Albert adores his uncle Leopold, and will not leave him for a moment; he looks sweetly (makes soft eyes) at him, kisses him every moment; and is only happy when he is by him." Assuredly the uncle was to become a foremost beloved figure in the story of those young lives. He could not take any leading part in the celebrations, but he was present at the christening of the infant princess, which took place at Kensington Palace on the 24th of June, a month after the date of her birth.

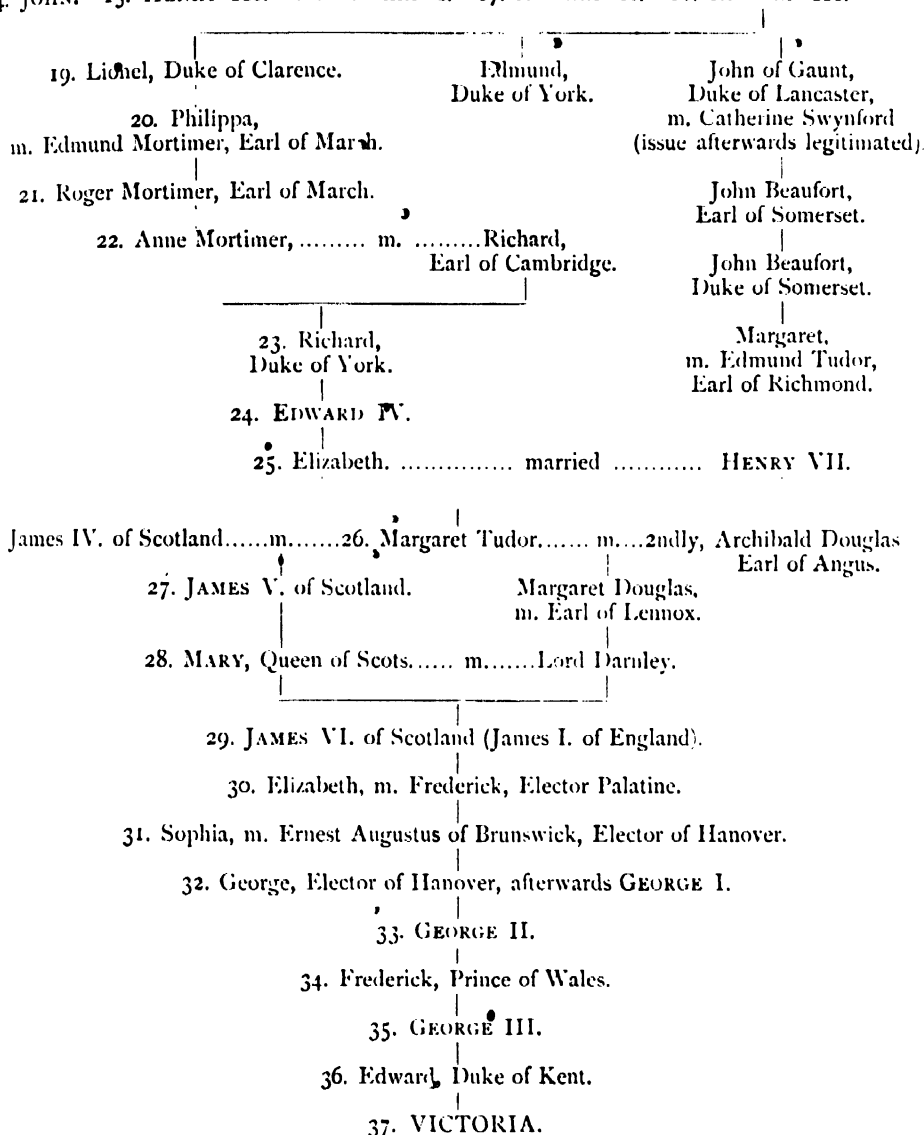
Although the Prince Regent took care to make it understood that in case of his obtaining a divorce from the Princess Caroline he might marry again, and though there was some probability of the Duchess of Clarence giving an heir to the throne, the Duke of Kent was firm in the conviction that the crown would come to the princess, and when showing the infant to his friends, who of course were much interested in her, would say with a kind of subdued delight, "Look at her well, for she will be Queen of England." It is not surprising therefore that the christening was an event which occasioned a little excitement and was made of some importance. The gold font was brought from the Tower of London, where it had long remained undisturbed, the draperies from the Chapel Royal, Saint James's, were hung in the grand saloon of the palace, where the solemn rite was performed by the Archbishop of Canterbury and the Bishop of London. The chief sponsors were the Prince Regent and the Emperor Alexander of Russia, represented by the Duke of York, and in whose honour the infant princess was to receive the name of Alexandrina. The godmothers were the Princess-dowager of Wurtemburg (the princess-royal and eldest aunt of the infant princess), represented by Princess Augusta; and the Dowager-duchess of Coburg (the grandmother of the infant princess), represented by the Duchess of Gloucester, the Princess Mary.

At first it was the wish of the Prince Regent, as a mark perhaps of great conciliation, to bestow on the child his own name and that of the former regnant members of the family, and to have her christened *Georgiana* Alexandrina. We may be thankful that the nation was spared *that.* The English may-flower, by any other name than Victoria, would have been as sweet, but it would have taken some time to get over "*Georgiana.*" The Duke of Kent had wished the child to be named Elizabeth, as it was a favourite name in England; but the Regent seems to have only dropped "Georgiana" in favour of paying a compliment to the Russian emperor, and so the name was given as Alexandrina, and on the Duke of Kent saying that he should like a second name, the prince replied: "Then let it be her mother's, but Alexandrina must precede it." The future Queen was, therefore, named Alexandrina Victoria; but the first name was almost from the first abandoned for that of Victoria, a name that soon stole into the hearts of the English people, and for fifty years has represented to them the dominant grace and goodness of their sovereign Lady.

We have already[1] seen what is the lineage of her Majesty on her mother's side, and that it was also the lineage of the prince who was in years to come to be her royal consort; but it will be convenient here to show in a tabulated form the descent of her Majesty the Queen from Egbert, the first actual King of England; the line of Brunswick-Hanover joining the succession by the marriage of the Duke of Brunswick-Luneburg, afterwards Elector of Hanover, to Sophia, who was the youngest child of the Elector-palatine and Elizabeth eldest daughter of James the First. George the First was the son of the said Duke of Brunswick Elector of Hanover, and Sophia.

[1] Page 64. The elder branch of the Saxon family—the Saxe-Coburgs.

DESCENT OF QUEEN VICTORIA FROM EGBERT.



1. EGBERT. 2. ETHELWOLF. 3. ALFRED THE GREAT. 4. EDWARD THE ELDER. 5. EDMUND. 6. EDGAR. 7. ETHELRED. 8. EDMUND IRONSIDE. 9. Edward (not a king). 10. Margaret, wife of Malcolm, King of Scotland. 11. Matilda, wife of HENRY I. 12. Matilda or Maud, Empress of Germany, and wife of Geoffrey of Anjou. 13. HENRY II. 14. JOHN. 15. HENRY III. 16. EDWARD I. 17. EDWARD II. 18. EDWARD III.

19. Lionel, Duke of Clarence.

Edmund, Duke of York.

John of Gaunt, Duke of Lancaster, m. Catherine Swynford (issue afterwards legitimated).

20. Philippa, m. Edmund Mortimer, Earl of March.

21. Roger Mortimer, Earl of March.

22. Anne Mortimer, ... m. ....Richard, Earl of Cambridge.

John Beaufort, Earl of Somerset.

John Beaufort, Duke of Somerset.

23. Richard, Duke of York.

Margaret, m. Edmund Tudor, Earl of Richmond.

24. EDWARD IV.

25. Elizabeth. .... married .... HENRY VII.

James IV. of Scotland......m.......26. Margaret Tudor....... m....2ndly, Archibald Douglas Earl of Angus.

27. JAMES V. of Scotland.

Margaret Douglas, m. Earl of Lennox.

28. MARY, Queen of Scots...... m.......Lord Darnley.

29. JAMES VI. of Scotland (James I. of England).

30. Elizabeth, m. Frederick, Elector Palatine.

31. Sophia, m. Ernest Augustus of Brunswick, Elector of Hanover.

32. George, Elector of Hanover, afterwards GEORGE I.

33. GEORGE II.

34. Frederick, Prince of Wales.

35. GEORGE III.

36. Edward, Duke of Kent.

37. VICTORIA.

In the domestic suite of rooms at Kensington Palace the first months of the princess's infancy were passed, but even at that early age she was occasionally seen outside the world of the nursery. In the month of August the princess was vaccinated, and to use a common expression—the vaccination "took well," a fact worth mentioning, because it was only just before that date that the discovery of the use of vaccine by Dr. Jenner had begun to supersede the old plan of "inoculation," and the baby Victoria was the first member of the royal family who was submitted to the new treatment.

The child throve famously, for her mother performed all those maternal duties which are, or were, too often neglected by ladies of high rank, and not only "nursed" her baby, but then and long afterwards personally attended to the daily bathing and the tiny toilette. These may appear to be small matters to record, but they have a very definite relation to the sound health which her Majesty has enjoyed, and for the strength which has enabled her cheerfully to fulfil her duties to the state even under very trying conditions.

The responsibility accepted by the Duchess of Kent was at all events sufficient to cause admiration if not surprise, for we find the duke writing in reply to Dr. Collyer:—"I appreciate most gratefully your obliging remarks upon the duchess's conduct as a mother, upon which I shall only observe, that parental feeling and a just sense of duty, and not the applause of the public, were the motives which actuated her in the line which she adopted. She is, however, most happy that the performance of an office most interesting in its nature has met with the wishes and feelings of society."

When the cold weather set in with some severity the duke made arrangements for spending part of the winter in the

milder climate of Devonshire, and secured a pleasant abode at Woolbrook Cottage at Sidmouth. The journey was a long one, and the roads were so bad that it took nearly two days to go from Salisbury, so that it was necessary to stay for a night at an inn at Ilminster; but the destination was safely reached, and the good folk at Sidmouth were loyally delighted to receive the distinguished visitors, who, by the simplicity and kindliness of their manners, immediately became popular.

The first serious danger which threatened the infant princess was at this quiet abode. A careless boy who had contrived to get hold of a gun, and went out to shoot any small birds that he could find, carried his sport so close to the duke's cottage that he fired through the nursery window. The glass was shattered, and some of the shot passed close to the head of the child in the nurse's arms. The delinquent was captured and brought before the duke, who with the duchess had been seriously alarmed; but perhaps not much more alarmed than the culprit himself, who, however, escaped with a solemn warning and reprimand on promising to be more careful in future.

Alas! this was but a small trouble—a flutter of anxiety—soon to be followed by a terrible calamity. The child for whom such tender care was manifested became fatherless,—the mother for the second time a widow,—the nation was again mourning—mourning the loss of a prince who had been distinguished for his kindly charities and personal virtues, no less than for a liberal patriotism. His constant delight was in the child for whom he presaged so great a future: but this was to be made a reason for simple and unpretentious training—the training of the heart and mind.

Amidst numerous current stories and anecdotes of the early life of the Queen, some of which are, of course, not authentic,

but most of which have been recently repeated, is one which may be accepted as illustrative, not only of the earnest and anxious affection that the duke bore to his child, but of his deep religious feeling. It was originally related by a clergyman who was on most friendly terms with the duke, and who had called at Kensington Palace to take leave of him previous to the journey to Sidmouth. The duke asked him to see the infant princess in her crib, and said, "As it may be some time before we meet again, I should like you to see the child and give her your blessing." They went into the little princess's room, and on the visitor closing a short prayer that as she grew in years she might grow in grace and favour both with God and man, the duke responded with a fervent "Amen," and said with much emotion, "Don't pray simply that hers may be a brilliant career, and exempt from those trials and struggles which have pursued her father; but pray that God's blessing may rest on her, that it may overshadow her, and that in all her coming years she may be guided and guarded by God."

The pleasant cottage at Sidmouth had been occupied only a few weeks when the duke took an illness which proved fatal. He had been out for a long walk with his trusted friend and equerry Captain Conroy, and had returned probably somewhat heated and certainly with wet boots, which (neglecting the advice of his companion), he delayed changing, attracted to linger for a little while, it was said, to play with his baby daughter, whom he saw holding out her hands to him. Whatever may have been the cause, he appears to have taken a chill, and in the evening showed some of the symptoms of a bad cold, which increased to inflammation of the lungs and fever. It was, however, not of this that he died, but of the same kind of mistaken medical treatment which had killed the Princess Charlotte. The duke was a strong

man, and the plan adopted for curing his disorder was to make him a weak one, by "cupping" and bleeding.

On the afternoon of the 22d of January (1820) it was known that he could not recover. He appeared to be losing consciousness, but he at once knew the voice of his old and attached friend General Wetherall, who had been brought to his bedside. He was able to talk coherently, and by a strong effort to listen to the reading of his will, which he signed slowly, taking pains to make each letter of the word "Edward" clearly legible. His "beloved wife Victoire, Duchess of Kent," was made sole guardian to the infant princess, and the estate was for their benefit, Captain Conroy and General Wetherall being left trustees. The duke died on the following day (Sunday the 23d) very early in the morning, and the duchess, who for days and nights had been by his bedside, was left desolate. The Princess Feodora, then a little more than nine years of age, deeply felt the death of her stepfather. Years afterwards, when she had long been married to the Prince Hohenlohe and separated from her little sister, who had become Queen of England, and whom she had tenderly loved, she wrote: "Indeed, I well remember that dreadful time at Sidmouth. I recollect praying on my knees that God would not let your dear father die. I loved him dearly; he always was so kind to me." There is something very charming in this; it is a testimony to the worth of the man, more valuable than a hundred studied eulogies.

The kind and faithful brother Prince Leopold was in Scotland, but hastened to the bereaved wife; not only to sympathize with her, but to console her by immediate support and generous assistance. Her position was a painful one; for she was almost a stranger to the English royal family, from whom she probably had few expectations, knowing what had been the experience of

her husband and having heard something of the continued quarrels and divisions. She was also in comparative poverty. There had been no settlement of the duke's pecuniary difficulties, and she did not even possess the means to return with her establishment to Kensington until her brother's ready aid enabled her to make adequate arrangements.

Loving sympathy was not altogether wanting in the hearts of her husband's kinsfolk, however. The royal dukes were touched and grieved at the sad news of their brother's illness; and the Princess Augusta, to whom the Duchess of Kent had written (in French, for she could not write English), was, as she said, nearly heart-broken, for she sincerely loved her brother, and seemed to be the amiable pacificator, willing but not able to heal the animosities of the family. Speaking of the duchess, in a letter to Lord Harcourt, she said: "She has conducted herself like an angel; and I am thankful dearest Leopold was with her. I long to hear of her; but I fear we shall not for these ten days; it will be a sad meeting to us both. But she will be doubly dear to me now, and indeed I loved her dearly before."

Some days later, when the duchess and her children with their household had made the journey from Sidmouth and were at Kensington, the princess again wrote—"She is the most pious, good, resigned little creature it is possible to describe. She has written to me once; and I received the letter from her and one from Adelaide, *written together* from Kensington. Dearest William is so good-hearted that he has desired Adelaide to go to Kensington every day, so she is a comfort to the poor widow; and her sweet, gentle mind is of great use to the Duchess of Kent. It is a great delight to me to think that they can read the same prayers and talk the same mother-tongue together; it makes them such real friends and comforts to each other."

This reference to the Princess Adelaide, the wife of the Duke of Clarence (afterwards William the Fourth), is very touching, and suggests the amiable disposition and tenderness of that really good woman.

Hers was a gentle, unselfish spirit, apparently incapable of mean jealousy, and her affectionate heart was touched by the affliction of the mother and the apparent isolation which must be the lot of the fatherless girl, unless the duty of lovingkindness appealed to those who were themselves near the throne. Her own infant, a daughter born two months before the birth of the Princess Victoria, had lived only a few hours, but this loss of the child who would have stood near to the succession left no bitter feeling; and even two years later (on the 11th of March, 1821), when a second daughter died only a few weeks old, the sorrow and disappointment brought nothing but tender thoughts of the child at Kensington. "My children are dead, but yours lives, and she is mine too," wrote this dear lady to her sister-in-law. Such a message sent in the midst of grief needs no comment.

On the 29th of January, 1820, six days after the death of the Duke of Kent at Sidmouth, his father, King George the Third, expired at Windsor. "It has pleased the Almighty to release the King from all further suffering," was the announcement which told of his death, and the words were appropriate, for he had been long dead to most of those things that belong to the duties and the pleasures of life. The accession of the Prince Regent as George the Fourth was little more than a formal proclamation, for he had been practically on the throne for ten years, and was himself seriously ill with a cold which ended in a similar disorder to that of which his brother the Duke of Kent had died.

The funeral of the duke took place on the 12th of February at Windsor, whither his body had been brought from Sidmouth, the journey occupying nearly a week, the procession having to halt on successive nights at Bridport, Blandford, Salisbury, and Basingstoke, the coffin being deposited in the church of each town with a military guard. From Cumberland Lodge, where the body lay in state for a day, there went a long and stately funeral procession, consisting of the Dukes of York, Clarence, Sussex, and Gloucester, and Prince Leopold, in long black cloaks borne by attendants, and of field-marshals and generals bearing the pall and canopy—"poor knights," pursuivants, pages, and heralds. The funeral took place at night, and those who took part in it walked by torch-light amidst a large assembly of persons who, in that wintry weather, had arrived from London and other parts of the country to witness the solemn spectacle "viewed from the distance of three miles through the spacious long walk, amidst a double row of lofty trees, whilst at intervals the glittering of the flambeaux and the sound of martial music were distinctly seen and heard." A few days afterwards the body of the King was also laid in its last resting-place.

But happily even amidst sorrow and mourning the realities of life fail neither in their compensations nor their demands, and the Duchess of Kent, in obedience to her husband's last injunctions and with an unfailing sense of the obligations which she alone could adequately fulfil, prepared to face a situation of great difficulty and of what to one in her position was actual poverty. It would appear that by some flaw in the act of Parliament or the settlement she could not claim the amount which was to have come to her as jointure, and as she had already forfeited her previous settlement she was compelled to accept the aid of her brother Prince Leopold, and of other

friends, until the error was rectified by the payment of the jointure, which amounted to £6000 a year. As she had consented to give up the property bequeathed by the duke, for the discharge of his debts, she had still for some time to rely upon the generosity of her brother, who, it was understood, made her a considerable annual allowance.

She, however, possessed much calm courage, supported by the consciousness of integrity, and stimulated by the responsibilities which devolved upon her. Her own brief and simple statement explains her situation as seen in the first months of her widowhood: "A few months after the birth of my child, my infant and myself were awfully deprived of father and husband. We stood alone, almost friendless and unknown in this country. I could not even speak its language. I did not hesitate how to act. I gave up my home, my kindred, and other duties to devote myself to a duty which was to be the sole object of my future life."

That duty was commenced with a reverent and hopeful belief that it would be a blessed one; and the belief was well founded. Her life at Kensington with her children was an example of pure and simple domestic peace, and she had the deep and abiding satisfaction of seeing under its influence the formation of elements which were to give a new character to royalty, and silently to work in unison with the highest and best form of that social reformation which was approaching though not yet distinctly perceived. She gained the esteem, the affection, not only of her children, but of the pure in heart who recognized the value of her labour of love. Withdrawn, almost secluded, from the court and from the conventional gaieties and pleasures of fashionable life, she was within the borders of a better and nobler kingdom. She had secured the regard and

respect of the people and the true leaders of the nation even before she had thoroughly acquired the language, which she was not slow to learn.

Viscount Morpeth and Viscount Clive waited on the Duchess of Kent with an address of condolence from the House of Commons, and she met them with her child in her arms—a simple unceremonious reception, but affecting and significant. Many friends of her late husband, and several representatives of charitable and benevolent institutions in which he had been personally interested, also went to pay their respects, and the baby princess was, so to speak, introduced to a considerable number of loyal and loving persons, who kept a place in their hearts and memories for the fair, rosy, smiling face, above which some of them fancied they saw the reflected light of a not-far-distant crown. 'The Duke of York, who, with all his great faults, had a kindly heart, called to encourage and to sympathize, and, if we are to accept a story which has often been repeated, baby Victoria unconsciously won that heart at once. The duke had scarcely entered the room when the child, recognizing in him a likeness to her father, held out her arms with a smile accompanied by infantile exclamations which quite overcame him. Warmly embracing her he declared with emotion that he would indeed be a father to her, and he appears to have shown real kindness to her and to her mother until his death in 1827. One of his early presents was a beautiful donkey on which the child afterwards learned to ride, much to the benefit of her health, and this donkey, which was a docile and excellent animal, became popular, if not historical, so frequently did it appear gaily caparisoned in Kensington Gardens, or at a later date at Tunbridge Wells and elsewhere, sedately bearing its little mistress. It is said that when, soon after her fourth birthday, her

uncle, George the Fourth, had sent an invitation for her to visit Carlton House, she gleefully asked, "Oh! mamma, shall I go upon my donkey?" for she could not doubt that his Majesty would be pleased to see an animal of which she held such a good opinion.

Among the earlier visitors to the duchess after her bereavement was Mr. Wilberforce, who was invited to Kensington as an old and esteemed friend of the duke, who agreed with him in his philanthropic opinions and in his efforts to abolish negro slavery. He lived at Gore House, Kensington, afterwards famous as the dwelling of Lady Blessington and Count d'Orsay, and much later, during the Great Exhibition of 1851, as the "symposium," or refreshment-house, where the culinary art of various nations was exemplified under the direction of the celebrated Alexis Soyer. Mr. Wilberforce, who is described by Leigh Hunt as a "worthy ultra serio-comic person,—a little, plain-faced man, radiant by nature with glee and good humour, very 'serious' at a moment's notice, an earnest devotee, a genial host, a good speaker, and member of parliament," wrote to his friend Hannah More on the 21st of July, 1820: "In consequence of a very civil message from the Duchess of Kent I waited on her this morning. She received me with her fine animated child on the floor by her side with its playthings, of which I soon became one. She was very civil, but as she did not sit down I did not think it right to stay above a quarter of an hour, and there being but a female attendant and a footman present I could not well get up any topic so as to carry on a continued discourse. She apologized for not speaking English well enough to talk it; but intimated that she might talk it better and longer with me at some future time. She spoke of her situation, and her manner was quite delightful."

The princess was early trained to simple and regular living, and was carried frequently in the open air. As she grew older she took plenty of exercise, either riding on her pet donkey or running at a remarkable pace about the lawns and gardens of Kensington Palace, so that she was often observed by passers-by, who could see her from the other side of the railings, and to whom she often used very gracefully to proffer pretty infantile greetings. Of course she had not been made to learn many lessons before she was four years old. "Do not tease your little puss with learning. She is so young still," wrote the dowager-duchess to her daughter; but she had learned to read almost before she could speak plainly, and though she was afterwards sometimes as wayward with regard to her lessons as many other children are, and even when being taught her alphabet is said to have asked, "What good this? what good this?" she was no sooner convinced of the advantage of learning than she studied with much regularity, and even with avidity. But then it must be remembered that her mother was her early instructress, constantly watched over her, and wisely arranged that in work or play, physical, as well as mental and moral health and development should receive due attention. In childhood and in girlhood the princess slept in her mother's room. An account which has been received as authentic says: "At eight, in summer, the family party met at breakfast; Princess Victoria had her bread and fruit and milk on a little table by her mother's side. After breakfast the Princess Feodora studied with her governess Miss Louise Lehzen, or the two princesses would walk or drive for an hour. From ten to twelve Princess Victoria received instruction from her mother, and would then run about or amuse herself with her toys in the suite of rooms that formed two sides of the palace. Mrs. Brock was the name of the nurse, who,

however, was generally saluted as 'dear, dear Boppy!' At two o'clock the duchess had luncheon, and the princess partook of her plain dinner by her mother's side. Then till four o'clock lessons again occupied the time, after which there was a visit or a drive, and then perhaps a ride or walk in the gardens. Occasionally on fine summer evenings the whole party would sit out under the trees on the lawn. When the time came for her mother to dine, a simple supper was laid beside her for Princess Victoria. After a little time to play with her nurse, the princess joined the party at dessert, and at nine retired to her bed, which was placed beside her mother's."

It was a well-ordered child life, and though we can fancy a sense of loneliness when the rosy plump child, or, later, the little girl with much capacity for fun and social pleasures, broke the rather subdued echoes of the old galleries and rooms with the sound of her flying feet, or loitered sometimes to gaze at the pictures and scan the portraits, some of them of rather puffy-faced juveniles representing members of the previous royal families, there was some compensation in the hours spent out of doors.

A very tender affection existed between the little princesses, the half-sister Feodora evidently loving "the baby" dearly, and being well satisfied to accompany the miniature phaeton drawn by an attendant, or the almost equally diminutive pony carriage. It was in Kensington Gardens, while "taking the air" in this carriage, that the infant Victoria met with an accident which, but for the quickness and presence of mind of a private soldier who was passing, might have had a very serious result. The pony was being led by a page, a lady—presumably the duchess—walked on one side, and a young woman beside the chaise. A large water-dog gambolling on the road got between the

legs of the pony and caused it to plunge, bringing the wheels of the carriage on to the pathway. The child was falling out, and the carriage appeared to be toppling over upon her, when, before she reached the ground, head foremost, the soldier, whose name was Maloney, caught her by the dress and swung her upward into his arms. After restoring her to the lady, amidst the congratulations of the few people assembled, he was told to follow the carriage to the palace, where he received a guinea and the very fervent thanks of the duchess, and it is said that he was afterwards not lost sight of.

In her very early days, when riding on her pet donkey, the princess was often attended by a pensioner, presumably Hillman, a soldier who had been with the Duke of Kent's regiment at Gibraltar, and remained faithful to him at the time of the attempted mutiny. This man continued in the duke's service, and he and his family had a cottage provided for them near the palace at Kensington, and were not forgotten in later years. The princess was sometimes reluctant to dismount from her donkey that she might walk or run on the grass as she was encouraged to do by her mother or the attendants, and it was occasionally necessary for the old soldier to use his persuasive powers, or for a representation to be made that the donkey needed to be fed or to have a rest; and these arguments were usually effectual, for the princess had a remarkable regard for animals, and was very careful of their well-being. It may be readily understood that the tiny Victoria, though usually good-tempered and docile, had a strong will of her own, and we have yet to learn that this is any other than a good attribute when that will is conformable to right convictions. It had the effect, however, combined with a love of fun, to make it difficult always to control the exuberant spirits of the child; and when

she had begun to run—and she ran at an extraordinary rate—along the length of the broad gravel walk, or up and down the green slopes, it was difficult to induce her to leave off, even when a considerable number of ladies, gentlemen, and children had assembled and stood in a semicircle watching her. In fact, on these occasions it is said the infant princess would occasionally speak to the lookers-on as though they were taking some part in her amusement. It may be imagined how many "little dears," and "sweet little loves," were elicited from the women who watched her; for the baby princess loved to be noticed, and to notice everybody in return by dainty little curtseys and kisses of her chubby hand. This frank and unaffected demeanour towards everybody whom she met, either in London or at the various places which she visited, remained even after the unconscious freedom and merry familiarity of first childhood had passed; and it is potent to-day, because it proceeds, not from any studied method of conduct for the purpose of courting popularity, but from simple and healthy training of a heart naturally trustful of loyalty, and believing in mutual good-will.

The general regard, or we might say the respectful familiarity with which the frequent presence of the little princess was noticed, was repeated at Ramsgate, whither the Duchess of Kent went for the summer, when the child was five years old, and where she afterwards stayed on several occasions. There one hears of Princess Victoria on the sands in her simple dress, a plain straw-bonnet with a white ribbon round the crown, a coloured muslin frock looking gay and cheerful, and as pretty a pair of shoes on as pretty a pair of feet as anyone could wish to see. There, too, we hear of William Wilberforce again conversing with the duchess and laughing as a wave unexpectedly rippled over these

little shoes and feet. Here, too, we hear of the visit of the child to the bazaar, or shops where shell-boxes, coral ornaments, and knick-knacks were and are still sold, or of her bestowing her weekly allowance of pocket-money on some poor old creature whom she notices as she passes along the High Street.

The name of Miss Jane Porter is still remembered by people who in their youth were acquainted with her stories, *The Scottish Chiefs* and *Thaddeus of Warsaw*. This lady was living with her sister, Anna Maria (who wrote *The Hungarian Brothers* and *The Recluse of Norway*), with their aged mother at a cottage not far from Claremont, and when the duchess and her daughter were staying there these three ladies were never tired of waiting or walking when they would be likely "to meet the young hope of England taking her morning exercise," either "walking by the side of her governess, or running forward in the eagerness of childhood's happy impulses with a bounding elasticity of active enjoyment, which full health only, or the spring of earliest youth can know." Miss Porter in a letter describes the infant princess as "a beautiful child, with a cherubic form of features, clustered round by glossy fair ringlets; her complexion was remarkably transparent, with a soft but often heightening tinge of the sweet blush rose upon her cheeks that imparted a peculiar brilliancy to her clear blue eyes."

But the early domestic life at Kensington was probably of the most interest, at all events to Londoners, and many brief but always loyal and pleasant references were made to it and to the appearance of the princess, who had already begun to dwell in the affection of people holding very different views and opinions on political and other matters, but in excellent accord on the subject of the healthy training of the child, her bright and attractive ways and appearance, and her unaffected simple manner.

It will be seen that even in these very early days the little princess attracted a good deal of public notice. On more than one occasion references were made in magazines and newspapers to the appearance of the child as, holding the hand of her sister the Princess Feodora, and drawing a toy cart by a string, she returned the salutations and compliments of the persons who were passing. It is said that even then, but more particularly when she was a little older, she took the greatest interest in other children, and was always particularly pleased to be allowed to speak to any infant that was being carried in the gardens. She would also take great pleasure in meeting a school of young ladies out for a walk, and would stop and talk to the younger ones of the party. When the princess was only three years old a correspondent of a daily paper wrote: "Passing accidentally through Kensington Gardens a few days since, I observed at some distance a party, consisting of several ladies, a young child, and two men-servants, having in charge a donkey, gaily caparisoned with blue ribbons, and accoutred for the use of the infant. The appearance of the party, and the general attention they attracted, led me to suspect they might be the royal inhabitants of the palace. I soon learnt that my conjectures were well founded. . . . On approaching the royal party, the infant princess, observing my respectful recognition, nodded, and wished me a 'good morning' with much liveliness, as she skipped along between her mother and her sister the Princess Feodora, holding a hand of each. Having passed on some paces, I stood a moment to observe the actions of the child, and was pleased to see that the notice with which she honoured me was extended, in a greater or less degree, to almost every person she met. Her royal highness is remarkably beautiful, and her gay and animated countenance bespeaks perfect health and good temper."

On her fourth birthday the princess received a superb and characteristic present from the King her uncle, who had not seen her since she was a year old. He sent her a miniature portrait of himself set in diamonds. Soon afterwards, by his Majesty's special request, she was taken to visit him at Carlton House, where she was introduced with her mother to special guests invited to a state dinner party. It has been recorded that the princess was dressed in a plain white frock, of which the left sleeve was looped up and fastened with the costly miniature.

The King like other people was delighted with the bright and frank good humour of the child, and from that time showed more kindness to the Duchess of Kent, while his interest in his niece was shown by his causing an application to be made to Parliament for a grant for her maintenance and education. The princess, as we have seen, received her early instruction from her mother, who was also competent to superintend her later studies, but she had also the inestimable advantage of being under the care of the lady who had come to England as the governess of the Princess Feodora, and who remained to carry on the education of the little Princess Victoria, to whom she was devotedly attached. This lady was Louise Lehzen, daughter of a Hanoverian clergyman, and in 1827, three years after she had been officially recognized as governess to the princess, she received the rank of a Hanoverian baroness, conferred on her by George IV. at the request of the Princess Sophia. The household at Kensington was characterized by mutual regard and esteem—and it appears to have been a harmonious one, although it was quiet, and was, so to speak, pitched to a subdued tone. As governess and lady-in-attendance the Baroness Lehzen remained till the princess was to become queen, and long afterwards, amidst the cares of state and domestic duties,

the former pupil continued regularly to write to the governess, who had retired to Hanover, where she died in 1870 at the age of eighty-seven. "My dearest, kindest friend old Lehzen expired on the 9th," wrote the Queen in her journal on that occasion. "She knew me from six months old, and from my fifth to my eighteenth year devoted all her care and energies to me with the most wonderful abnegation of self, never taking one day's holiday. I adored, though I was greatly in awe of her. She really seemed to have no thought but for me."

According to precedent the princess was also instructed by a "preceptor," who, in due time, taught her Latin, mathematics, and some Greek. The tutor or preceptor chosen by the duchess was the Rev. George Davys, who appears to have thoroughly deserved the confidence that was reposed in him, and to have been an excellent and judicious instructor. Afterwards, when the princess became direct heir to the throne, and it was suggested to the duchess that a bishop should be appointed instructor, she acutely replied that she had such reason to approve of Dr. Davys that she objected to any change being made; but that if it were thought necessary that the tutor to the princess should be a dignitary of the church, there could be no objection to Dr. Davys receiving the preferment which he so well merited. The result of this reply was that Dr. Davys was afterwards made Dean of Chester. At the close of his duties as tutor he became Bishop of Peterborough.

The infant princess had already been educated to obedience, to affectionate regard for the claims and feelings of others, and to a certain observance of orderliness; but it may be supposed there could have been little actual suppression of her naturally buoyant spirits, little "lecturing" as to the proprieties or the dignities, or she never would have acquired that simple but dignified

self-possession, which is the reverse of what is usually called self-consciousness, and is her Majesty's truly royal characteristic. Eminent truthfulness, she may be said to have inherited from her parents. "The Queen always had, from my first knowing her, a most striking regard for truth," Dr. Davys told Bishop Wilberforce. "I remember when I had been teaching her one day she was very impatient for the lesson to be over—once or twice rather refractory. The Duchess of Kent came in and asked how she had behaved. Lehzen said, 'Oh, once she was rather troublesome!' The princess touched her, and said, 'No, Lehzen, twice, don't you remember?' The Duchess of Kent, too, was a woman of great truth."

It will be easily understood that sound judgment and much discretion was necessary to enable the Duchess of Kent to maintain a certain independence in the management of her household and the education of the princess, and to avoid being implicated in party or family quarrels. Her child, as was well known, might at no very distant date become the sovereign of a great empire; but for some years such an event remained only remotely probable, as there might yet have been a nearer successor to the throne, and at her tender age the Princess Victoria could only be truly prepared for the great responsibility by being kept from any expectation of it. To have made the possible accession to a throne an incentive to obedience, docility, and childlike purity of intention would have been a mistake, and was a danger to be avoided.

This, with the need for refraining from any appearance of seeking to form a coterie, may have so limited the circle of visitors as to make the childhood of the little princess sometimes lonely for the lack of playfellows and companions. Her sister the Princess Feodora was so much older than herself, that though

they loved each other they could scarely be constant associates, and it should be remembered that the elder sister was married and had left England before the younger was ten years old. There is little doubt that many of the early days of the young Victoria were not altogether happy, and needed the cheering influence of play-fellowship to relax the sense of precision and watchfulness, which may be oppressive, where the child life does not find some sphere of its very own, and into which only rarely endowed adults who have never lost the childlikeness can expect frequently to enter. There is an anecdote of an occurrence, which, if it be true, sweetly and almost pathetically illustrates this need on the part of the princess. The duchess, always wishing to find suitable amusement to interest her little daughter, and knowing how delighted she was to listen to music, for which she had a remarkable talent, sent for a precocious juvenile performer on the harp, a child who, under the name of Lyra, had caused considerable sensation in the musical world. Lyra arrived at the palace, where she played to the princess, who sat listening with that intent and absorbing interest which was habitual to her when her attention was secured. In the midst of the performance the duchess was called to receive a message from an attendant, and was absent for some time. On her return the sound of the harp had ceased, and on re-entering the room she found the two children seated on the hearth-rug in happy consultation over the toys with which the princess had enticed the young musician, and some of which had been generously offered for her acceptance. If this story be true, and it has often been repeated without contradiction, it would make a charming subject for a picture; the direct assertion of the instinct for companionship in the two children who missed so much—one because of family claims and the exactions of royal

rank, the other probably because of family needs and the exactions of her art.

But we cannot regard the Princess Victoria as having had even a tinge of what is called a "moping" temper, and knowing how assiduously she followed the instructions of her teachers, it is something of a relief to learn that her usual good spirits and sense of fun sometimes led to a smart reminder of the fact that she recognized the possibility of asserting a will of her own if she chose to do so. The princess could sing with a very sweet and clear voice when she was yet little more than an infant, and could play the pianoforte very creditably at an age when few young ladies could accomplish more than the simplest scales. She must therefore have been young indeed when on being exhorted to make herself "mistress of the pianoforte," and that there was no royal road to learning music, she gaily retorted by locking the instrument, putting the key in her pocket, and saying, "There! that is being mistress of the piano! and the royal road to learning is never to take a lesson till you are in the humour to do it." We must imagine this to have been said with a smile of mock defiance, for the story ends with the intimation that having made her amusing demonstration she went and finished her lesson.

The little wilfulnesses of the princess appear to have given greater emphasis to the frank and charming submission or acknowledgments which appear to have followed, and were sometimes unexpectedly candid.

When walking in the grounds of Earl Fitzwilliam, whom she had visited with the duchess during a journey in the north of England, one of the under-gardeners called to her not to go along one of the paths as it was "slape," meaning that it was very slippery after a heavy rain.

"Slape, slape! and pray what is slape?" inquired the princess.

The meaning of the word was explained, but she was such an accustomed pedestrian, or rather runner, that this was not likely to cause her to hesitate, and she therefore went on without heeding the warning, and in a few seconds came rather heavily to the ground.

"Now your royal highness has an explanation of the term 'slape,' both theoretically and practically," cried Earl Fitzwilliam, who was standing at some distance.

"Yes, my lord, I think I have," replied the little lady with humorous meekness as she was assisted to pick herself up. "I shall never forget the word 'slape.'"

On another occasion—the story belongs to Ramsgate—the fearless child, always fond of animals, was playing with a dog, and was told that the creature was uncertain of temper, but she was not to be deterred, and presently there came a snap at her hand, and her cautioner ran up, expressing great fear that she had been bitten.

"Oh, thank you!" was the artless acknowledgment. "You are right and I am wrong; but he didn't bite me, he only *warned* me. I shall be careful in future."

There was a truly healthy tone of mind and body, and consequently there was no affectation, and there has always been in the character of our Queen that characteristic which is potent in maintaining consistency and tact—a genuine sense of humour. Not much verbal wit is expected of children, but more than one very amusing utterance of this kind has been repeated, as having been among the early utterances of the child, who began early to learn three or four European languages, and asked little favours in German as easily as in English, though she always persisted in protesting that she was a little English girl, and spoke her native language in preference.

These are but small chronicles of a young life, but they may be interesting, even if they are less authentic than the announcements of the court newsman. In truth the little princess was not much concerned with the court newsman, for though her education was superior to that of most children, and she became more really "accomplished" than most young ladies even amongst the nobility, she was in the "fashionable" sense far less conspicuous than many girls who were members of wealthy middle-class families.

The princess had made no state appearance at court, although of course she had visited her uncles and aunts, especially the Duke and Duchess of Clarence, and we hear something of her being taken to Windsor, where she was pleasantly received. The king was living there in comparative seclusion, his health seriously broken, his popularity not increased.

The records of some of those who at that time saw the child who was so soon to become next heir to the throne were to be permanently associated with a new era of English literature.

Lord Albemarle, when he wrote his Autobiography, described the interest that he, like many other people, took in observing the outdoor recreations of the little princess when she was about seven years old.

"One of my occupations of a morning, while waiting for the duke, was to watch from the windows the movements of a bright, pretty little girl seven years of age. She was in the habit of watering the plants immediately under the window. It was amusing to see how impartially she divided the contents of the watering-pot between the flowers and her own little feet. Her simple but becoming dress contrasted favourably with the gorgeous apparel now worn by the little damsels of the rising generation—a large straw hat and a suit of white cotton, a

coloured *fichu* round the neck was the only ornament she wore. The young lady I am describing was the Princess Victoria, now our gracious Sovereign, whom may God long preserve."

But there is a still more striking reference by the hand of a man, to whose memory this country owes a tribute which it is more ready to pay for any other service than for that of the author or of him who, by toiling, often with very restricted means and little opportunity for rest or leisure, to provide pure and elevating literature, promotes the best education of the people. This is not the place to speak of the remarkable development of what came to be called popular literature which took place at about the time that the little princess was playing in Kensington Gardens. Then, and for a good while afterwards, "albums," "keepsakes," "books of beauty," generally called "annuals," were among the principal lighter periodical literature for family reading, and there were the heavy quarterlies; but the age of truly popular periodicals may almost be said to have commenced with the *Penny Magazine*. Charles Knight, who succeeded his father as a bookseller at Windsor, was the projector and publisher of that, the *Penny Cyclopædia*, and a host of other admirable and entertaining books issued in weekly or monthly parts, to which he himself contributed (for he was a bright and instructive writer), assisted at various times by men of the advanced school of literature. Among these were Macaulay (then a young man), Brougham, and others, of whom Charles Lamb and Leigh Hunt already occupied a foremost place as contributors of light scholarly essays, stories, poems, and criticisms, which were highly entertaining and delightful in style and moral purpose.

We have from the hand of Charles Knight himself, in his *Passages of a Working Life*, a very charming reference: "In the early morning, when the sun was scarcely high enough to have

dried up the dews of Kensington's green alleys, as I passed along the broad central walk, I saw a group on the lawn before the palace, which, to my mind, was a vision of exquisite loveliness.

"The Duchess of Kent, and her daughter, whose years then numbered nine, are breakfasting in the open air—a single page attending upon them at a respectful distance—the matron looking on with eyes of love, whilst the 'fair, soft English face' is bright with smiles. The world of fashion is not yet astir. Clerks and mechanics, passing onward to their occupation, are few; and they exhibit nothing of that vulgar curiosity which I think is more commonly found in the class of the merely rich than in the ranks below them in the world's estimation.

"What a beautiful characteristic it seemed to me of the training of this royal girl, that she should not have been taught to shrink from the public eye—that she should not have been burdened with a premature conception of her probable high destiny—that she should enjoy the freedom and simplicity of a child's nature—that she should not be restrained when she starts up from the breakfast-table and runs to gather a flower in the adjoining parterre—that her merry laugh should be as fearless as the notes of the thrush in the groves around her.

"I passed on and blessed her; and I thank God that I have lived to see the golden fruits of such training."

These and similar expressions, which appear enshrined in the published sentiments of famous people, ring with a true note; and it may be remarked that they are not the words of courtesy or of flattery, by men and women who had any personal end to gain. On the contrary, they are remarkable for being frequently the spontaneous utterances of persons who were neither politically nor by temperament of the courtier class. Charles Knight was broadly liberal in his views, and was responsible for many a

shrewd satirical hit and genial but remarkably telling touch of satire directed against certain persons in high places. Leigh Hunt, as everybody knows, was what was then regarded as a violent Radical, if the term violent could be applied to so gentle and cultured a publicist. At any rate, the plain, bold strictures upon the government published in the *Examiner*, had subjected him and his brother John to official prosecutions. The first, which was for an attack on the Regency, was abandoned; another for an article on military floggings, was defeated by the able defence of Lord Brougham; but a third was too dreadful. Leigh Hunt, in his light satirical vein, had referred to the Regent as "a fat Adonis of fifty," and the brothers were sent to the Marshalsea prison for two years and fined £500 a-piece,—a sentence which, of course, caused them to become popular, and to receive the support of many leading wits, poets, and reformers; while the time in prison was not ill spent, for there Leigh Hunt wrote some admirable poems.

But let us see what he wrote, late in his long life, of a recollection which stirred his kindly heart and made his after loyalty as true as it was consistent.

"We remember well the peculiar kind of personal pleasure which it gave us to see the future Queen, the first time we ever did see her, coming up a cross path from the Bayswater gate, with a girl of her own age by her side, whose hand she was holding as if she loved her. It brought to our mind the warmth of our own juvenile friendships; and made us fancy that she loved everything else that we had loved in like measure,—books, trees, verses, Arabian tales, and the good mother who had helped to make her so affectionate.

"A magnificent footman, in scarlet, came behind her, with the splendidest pair of calves in white stockings that we ever

beheld. He looked somehow like a gigantic fairy, personating, for his little lady's sake, the grandest kind of footman he could think of; and his calves he seemed to have made out of a couple of the biggest chaise-lamps in the possession of the godmother of Cinderella. As the princess grew up, the world seemed never to hear of her, except as it wished to hear,—that is to say, in connection with her mother; and now it never hears of her, but in connection with children of her own, and with her husband, and her mother still, and all good household pleasures and hospitalities, and public virtues of a piece with them. May life ever continue to appear to her what, indeed, it really is to all who have eyes for seeing beyond the surface; namely, a wondrous fairy scene, strange, beautiful, mournful too, yet hopeful of being 'happy ever after,' when its story is over; and wise, meantime, in seeing much where others see nothing, in shedding its tears patiently, and in doing its best to diminish the tears around it."

Claremont, the fine mansion which had been bought for Prince Leopold, was now seldom visited by him, but it was left much at the disposal of his sister and her daughter, who were very dear to him. The house, being large and with lofty commodious rooms, and commanding fine views from the front, was a most agreeable residence, especially in summer, for the home demesne extended to about 420 acres, and the park and farms were about 1600 acres. It was not without sad memories. On an eminence in the garden a small Gothic building, erected for the Princess Charlotte, had, after her death, been converted into a mausoleum, dedicated to her memory, and containing a very fine bust.

The situation of the place, near Esher in Surrey, and only seventeen miles from Hyde Park Corner, made it easily acces-

sible from Kensington; and the walks and drives were so delightful that the princess always rejoiced when the time arrived to spend a season there. But there was a stronger reason even than her keen appreciation of the pleasant park and homestead, the beautiful gardens, and the long rambles in summer days. Her uncle Leopold, though he had ceased to reside at Claremont, came as a visitor while his little niece and her mother occupied it, and in his loved society the child was always happy, for he devoted much attention to her, walked with her, talked to her, and, with a rare faculty for teaching without books, gave her pleasant lessons on botany, in which he was fairly proficient, and contrived to make his companionship the means of changing the monotony of ordinary lessons, and giving each day the aspect of a holiday. It must have been some keen remembrance of this which caused the Queen—when writing to her uncle years afterwards (in January, 1843)—to say of Claremont, where she was staying after Prince Leopold had visited England: "This place has a peculiar charm for us both, and to me it brings back recollections of the happiest days of my otherwise dull childhood, when I experienced such kindness from you, dearest uncle, kindness which has ever since continued. . . . Victoria (the princess royal, her own little daughter) plays with my old bricks, and I see her running and jumping in the flower-garden as *old*, though I feel still *little* Victoria of former days used to do." Even when this letter was written the Queen was only twenty-four, and doubtless often inclined to join in the frolics of Victoria the second.

We hear of a visit of the kind, sensible grandmother, the Dowager-duchess of Coburg, to Claremont, where there was quite a pleasant family reunion, and she could see the little May-flower whose portrait she had cherished, and to whom her heart

went forth with genuine affection. We hear, too, of the celebration of the seventh birthday of the little princess in that pleasant home, and of a grand procession of her fifteen dolls, each representing a member of the royal family, and dressed by herself, aided by her nurse Mrs. Brock; and, moreover, there is a record of presents, among which stand forth a pair of the smallest mouse-coloured Highland ponies ever seen, brought especially from Scotland by Lady Huntly, who afterwards became Duchess of Gordon.

But we have already touched upon a later date, when the princess was approaching her eleventh year, and the time was coming at which she would have to occupy a more clearly defined position in relation to the throne, of which neither the glory nor the shadow had yet fallen upon her.

On the 26th of June, 1830, George the Fourth died at Windsor. As we have noted, the Duke of York had died in 1827, and therefore William Henry, Duke of Clarence, succeeded to the throne, and the Princess Victoria, who was just entering on the twelfth year of her age, stood next in succession.

The world had been moving since, in 1822, Mr. Canning became foreign secretary and devoted his splendid abilities to opposing the "Holy Alliance" formed after the Peace of Paris between France, Russia, Austria, and Prussia, to maintain what were, in most cases, despotic governments in Europe.

In 1824 Louis XVIII. had made way for his brother Charles X.; and in the same year Alexander I. of Russia had been succeeded by Nicholas I., who, as grand-duke, had paid a visit to Prince Leopold and Princess Charlotte at Claremont in 1816. He was then just twenty years old, singularly handsome, tall and erect in figure. Mrs. Campbell, the lady-in-waiting to the Princess Charlotte, had said of him: "What an amiable

creature! he is devilish handsome: he will be the handsomest man in Europe." According to his usual custom the grand-duke slept on a leathern sack filled with hay from the stable. Almost immediately after his accession Russia began to push its claims in the east of Europe at the expense of Turkey; while the attempts of Turkey and Egypt against Greek independence led to the alliance of the English, French, and Russian fleets, and to the battle of Navarino, which ended the war and made Greece into a kingdom, the throne of which Prince Leopold would have occupied, but for his refusal to accept certain conditions.

In 1825 Brazil had become an independent empire under Dom Pedro, son of John VI. of Portugal, and on John's death in 1826 Pedro renounced the Portuguese throne in favour of his daughter Donna Maria, a child of about the age of the Princess Victoria. Dom Pedro gave the Portuguese a national constitution when he resigned the throne, but his brother, Dom Miguel, was as averse to the liberties thus secured as he was to seeing his niece wearing the crown, and promoted a civil war which lasted till 1834, when the youthful sovereign was established on the throne. She soon after (in 1835) married the Duke of Leuchtenberg, who died three months afterwards. She then married (in 1836) the Roman Catholic Prince Ferdinand of Coburg, who was son of Prince Ferdinand, the younger brother of Duke Ernest of Coburg by Antoinette, the daughter of the Prince of Kohary.[1]

But to the young Princess Victoria the most important event on the continent of Europe occurred in this very year (1830), in which she was to take a more prominent place in the eye of the world. The revolution in Brussels, which had the effect of severing the Belgian provinces from the rule of Holland, took place

[1] See page 65.

early in the year, and though it did not secure that result till September, it led to negotiations which in 1831 ended in the establishment of Belgian independence, with Leopold as an elected constitutional sovereign, in whom the people and indeed other European states were already displaying the confidence which comes of genuine esteem. It may easily be believed that the prospect of parting with her beloved uncle was a great grief to the princess, to whom he had been father, friend, and counsellor; but, as we shall see, he maintained these relations with unabated regard, and amidst the arduous duties of government paid frequent visits to this country, and maintained the same loving care which he had always manifested.

Events in England during the years just preceding 1830 had also shown that vast changes were imminent, that a new era was soon to open. In Parliament the questions of Roman Catholic emancipation and parliamentary reform had loomed large, illuminated by the eloquence of Canning and of Brougham. O'Connell in 1824 had organized a Catholic Association, and in 1825 a Roman Catholic Relief Bill, brought in by Sir Francis Burdett, had passed the House of Commons, to be thrown out in the Lords, where the Duke of York had solemnly sworn that if he came to the throne he would never consent to the repeal of the Catholic disabilities, but it was felt that the rigorous exclusion of Catholics from office and from Parliament could not be long maintained.

The death of the Duke of York in 1827 was followed by the paralysis which ended the official life and the administration of Lord Liverpool; and little as George the Fourth liked Canning, because he had refused to countenance the persecution of Queen Caroline, and had supported the Catholic claims, Canning was made premier. But he was in ill-health, and his attendance at

the funeral of the Duke of York hastened his death, which took place in a few months, and shortly afterwards the Duke of Wellington formed an administration, of which Mr. Peel was home secretary. The friends of Canning, Mr. Huskisson, Mr. Grey, Lord Palmerston, and Mr. Lamb (who almost immediately afterwards, by the death of his father, became Viscount Melbourne) abandoned the ministry. Lord John Russell moved for the repeal of the Test and Corporation Acts, and Mr. Peel, left in a minority, withdrew his opposition. In the Lords the motion was supported by Lord Holland (the nephew of Charles James Fox), and the Duke of Sussex, whose ardent support of civil and religious liberty had not diminished, and had been resented by the King. The measure passed, and this, with the election of Daniel O'Connell to represent the county of Clare in Parliament, gave new and irresistible stimulus to the demand for the relief of the Catholics, who could not consistently be longer excluded. Both the Duke of Wellington and Peel saw that the claims of a large body of their fellow-countrymen must be acknowledged; and neither Wellington nor Peel was such a bigot as to refuse concession to demands which were obviously supported by the nation. The duke declared with deep emotion that there must either be concession or civil war, and Peel brought in the bill which, after strong opposition in the Lords, and warning tears from Lord Eldon (who had a weakness for crying, on special occasions), opened Parliament and offices of state to the Catholics, for whom a new form of oath was prepared in place of the oath of supremacy. They were still excluded from the offices of Regent, of Viceroy of Ireland, and of Lord Chancellor. It is to be noted, however, that the words in the new oath, "on the true faith of a Christian," had the effect of excluding Jews from Parliament till 1858, when they also had a special oath. Eight

years afterwards (in 1866) the separate form of oath for Catholics was abolished.

The King gave his royal assent to the bill with an ill grace, and showed no little resentment; but the ball of reform and improvement was set rolling. Many mitigatory changes in the criminal law, and a commission on the state of the law proposed by Brougham, which led to great improvements, were followed (in 1830) by the measure establishing the new police force. There was everywhere apparent an accession of earnest political activity, which, to experienced eyes, showed that a great measure of reform could not be far distant.

Before the end of the year (1830) another revolution had changed the aspect of affairs in France. Charles X. and his minister Polignac, reverting to the high-handed Bourbon policy, attempted to stifle political discussion in the press by prosecuting editors, and issuing "ordinances" forbidding publication of pamphlets or newspapers without official permission. There had been a bad harvest and a severe winter in the previous year, and there were not wanting signs of discontent ready to break out into open disaffection on any adequate provocation. The provocation soon came. When the elections came on in May a royal proclamation was issued attempting to influence the popular votes, and when this failed, the elections were declared to be annulled on the ground that the people had been misled, and directions were given altering the number and qualifications of the deputies and the manner of electing them. These "ordinances" were issued at midnight on the 26th of July. The next day there was a panic on the Bourse, and ominous gatherings of groups of citizens were to be observed in various parts of Paris. The editors, acting on counsel's opinion, declared that the ordinances were illegal. Polignac sent out police to stop the

publication of the newspapers, but the offices were closed against them, while the journals were being thrown out of the windows to the crowds of people who assembled in the streets. The Tribunal of Commerce and the legal authorities were opposed to the demands of the king, but the police broke open the doors of the printing-offices and destroyed the types and presses. About thirty of the elected deputies met and were waited on by a party of citizens, who told them that Marshal Marmont, who only had in Paris about 4000 troops whom he could trust, was posting soldiers all round the city. Next day the streets were blocked with barricades; the Hôtel de Ville was seized by the insurgents, who rang the alarm-bells and sent the tricolor flying from the steeples. The marshal sent to assure the king that he must make concessions or there would be an insurrection; but history was to repeat itself. The king was at cards; the court was amused; and the marshal was told to put down the insurrection. He withdrew to the Tuileries with as many of the soldiers as had not gone over to the insurgents. Two of the peers waited on Polignac and urged the immediate withdrawal of the ordinances; and as he refused, they ordered Marmont to arrest him. He escaped to St. Cloud, and the king, now really alarmed, agreed after some parleying to revoke the ordinances and appoint a new ministry. But it was then too late, for the revolution had become an accomplished fact. Charles was left with only a few soldiers. Marmont could do nothing with his doubtful troops, for whom he could not provide rations. Late on the 1st of August the king and his companions were informed that a strong provisional government had nominated Louis Philippe, the Duke of Orleans, Lieutenant-general of France. Charles then offered to abdicate in favour of the Grand Duc de Berri, but his proposals were received with indifference.

He was strongly advised to hand over the regalia without further parley, and to depart from France by way of Cherbourg. He may be said to have left the kingdom without a hand being raised in his favour. He and his escort could not arouse the least demonstration of loyalty. It was like the departure of James the Second from England, and though nobody offered him violence, he did not feel safe until he embarked in an English vessel for Spithead.

It was not a "bloodless revolution," for there had been a good deal of fighting in the streets, and 800 citizens of Paris had been killed and 4500 wounded, while a large number of the opposing soldiers had been slain. Decorations and pensions were given to the wounded citizens, the dead received honourable burial; the ministers were tried and sentenced to imprisonment and forfeiture of property. Lafayette, who was ready to take advantage of any turn of the tide, espoused the new cause by proposing Louis Philippe as "the best of republics" for France, and the result was that under the title of King of the French, that astute and experienced personage swore fidelity to the charter, and France had an elected instead of an hereditary sovereign.

This reference is not out of place here, for we shall soon have to meet Louis Philippe again in these pages,—and moreover, the excitement in favour of parliamentary reform in this country at the time of the accession of William the Fourth in 1830 was raised to extreme activity by events in France.

One cannot now read the current political comments of that time without a smile when we come to William being called the "reforming king" and the "patriot king," in the sense that he initiated or even effectually promoted the "Reform Bill." That he yielded to political necessity or expediency goes without saying, but he scarcely did so with a good grace, and not until

he perceived that the country and the Whig ministry of Earl Grey would take no denial.

Not to speak of less respectful appellations, he was more truly and popularly called "the Sailor King," for he had been a sailor, and had much of the bluff hearty kind of bonhomie and good-nature which was usually associated with sailors. There can be little doubt that he had much of the bluntness and some of the coarseness that were also attributed to manners on board ship; and it is said on the authority of Greville that though at the meeting of ministers on the death of George IV. he behaved very well, he forgot himself when he was about to sign the constitutional declaration,—and blurted out, "This is a d—— bad pen you have given me." The Archbishop of Canterbury was present, and this was supposed conventionally to have made the expression less excusable.

One of the first provisions which Parliament thought it necessary to make on the accession of William was that of the appointment of a regency in case of his death, for the King was sixty-six years old, and there were no children of his marriage. His relations with the famous Mrs. Jordan (Dorothy Bland) the actress, long previous to his marriage, had been known and recognized; and it has been recorded that his amiable consort, finding that he had given orders for the removal of certain portraits of Mrs. Jordan and her children (who had been named Fitzclarence), ordered them to be restored to their former position in the King's apartments.

It is to be regretted that this and other more striking traits of her kindly nature—notably her unselfish affection for the Duchess of Kent and the Princess Victoria, who now stood next the throne—were not publicly known at that date, for such knowledge would have gone far to mitigate the unfounded

dislike which was manifested to her by those who regarded her as an enemy to popular freedom, and resented her quiet ways—her German nationality—her want of popular accomplishments. Brougham was partly responsible for the political animosity, and much mischief was done by coarse caricatures, which were designed to bring this gentle lady into contempt,—but she survived both.

There is not the least probability that Queen Adelaide desired to be appointed Regent, or that she tried to prevent the provisional appointment of the Duchess of Kent to that position, but the King seems to have regarded the possible regency of the duchess with no little antipathy. Under the circumstances it was inevitable that she should be appointed, or that the office should be conferred on the Duke of Cumberland, and such a proposal would have raised a popular tumult, which would have been very serious indeed. In his first message to Parliament, however, the King said nothing about the appointment of a regency in case of his death, and though the Houses of Lords and Commons both made reticent allusions to the matter, they were assured that the King was very well, and that they need not trouble themselves. The Tory ministry of the Duke of Wellington,—Peel, Goulbourn, and Aberdeen, remained in office, though Parliament was dissolved as usual on the accession; but the government of Earl Grey succeeded it, and the consideration of the appointment of a provisional regency had to be resumed. Towards the end of the year a bill was introduced into Parliament providing that Queen Adelaide, in the event of her giving birth to a child after the death of the King, should be guardian of such child and regent of the kingdom. If that event should not occur, the Duchess of Kent was to be regent during the minority of her daughter the Princess

Victoria, who was not to marry while a minor without the consent of the King, or, if he died, without the consent of both Houses of Parliament. The duchess was to be assisted by a Council of Regency, consisting of members of the royal family and ministers of state; and she was to forfeit the regency should she marry a foreigner during the lifetime of the King, and without his consent.

The Princess Victoria herself was unacquainted with the fact that she was next in succession to the throne. The utmost care had been taken to keep her from the knowledge of her position while there was any considerable doubt of her being the next heir, or until she was of an age to understand what were her expectations without being injured by the knowledge.

Her own shrewd observation had led her to note some difference between the salutations offered to her and to her elder sister, and it is said that at a very early date she inquired why all the gentlemen took off their hats to her instead of to the Princess Feodora. This, of course, could be explained by the reminder that she was a princess of the English royal family while her sister belonged to a foreign house; but it was difficult sometimes to avoid her questioning glances and quick observation. The elder sister had now (in 1830) been two years married to Prince Ernest Hohenlohe, one of the most upright and blameless of men. The wedding had taken place at Kensington Palace in February, 1828, according to the simple rites of the Lutheran Church, the ceremony being performed by Pastor Dr. Kuper, the chaplain of the Royal Lutheran Chapel. The King (George IV.) was too ill to be present, but the Duke and Duchess of Clarence, the Duke of Sussex, the Duke and Duchess of Gloucester, the Princess Sophia, the Princess Sophia of Gloucester, and Prince Leopold had been present, and the Duke of

Clarence gave away the bride, who almost immediately afterwards accompanied her husband to Germany. It was probably in view of the increased dulness of the household to the princess, then not quite ten years old, that the Duchess of Kent afterwards spent a considerable part of the year either at the seaside or at some other agreeable resort.

At Broadstairs or at Ramsgate—where they occupied Towneley House, overlooking the harbour,—at the Marina of St. Leonard's, and at Tunbridge Wells, the Duchess of Kent and the Princess Victoria were already well known and loyally welcomed; but they visited these places in simple and unpretentious fashion. The princess—plainly, but always becomingly attired—rode, or walked, or ran, without much regard to the weather, for she had been trained to healthy exercise; and her own ingenuous manner and ready appreciation of the courtesy of everybody around her, enabled her to appear without restraint in places where visitors congregated, or to visit shops and bazaars and spend her pocket-money as other children did.

The mention of pocket-money may remind us that it was very well understood by everybody concerned that habits of economy were observed and inculcated. The Duchess of Kent had reason to know that extravagance has to be paid for by somebody, probably at the cost of much inconvenience if not of suffering; and she also recognized that the duty had fallen to her to pay debts which had not been incurred by herself, and carefully to avoid giving occasion for reproach by increasing her liabilities.

There can be no doubt that the little princess was taught quite early that pocket-money was not illimitable, and that she learned to be contented with a very moderate allowance, and to be satisfied with such recreations as were inexpensive, that is to

say, visits to some of the galleries and show places in London, and the "parade," the morning assembly, or the esplanade and the band at the summer resorts. An incident said to have occurred at Tunbridge Wells has often been repeated. The princess was buying a few presents to give to her friends, and had spent all her money, when she remembered that there was another person to whom she would like to give a little souvenir, and at the same time her attention was attracted by a very pretty box, the price of which was half-a-crown. The woman who kept the shop would have sent the box with the rest of the purchases, though it had not been paid for, but the princess's governess could not permit it. "As the princess has not got the money she cannot buy the box," she remonstrated. "But I will put it aside then, and keep it for her royal highness," said the shopkeeper. "Oh, if you will be good enough to do that, the princess can come for it when she has the money." This was done, for punctually on pocket-money morning the princess appeared at the shop on her donkey and completed her purchase. There is not much in the story; but it was told on the authority of Harriet Martineau, and it was one of many which were current at the time, and then and afterwards people in London, as well as at Ramsgate, Brighton, St. Leonard's, Tunbridge Wells, and elsewhere showed unmistakable pleasure in hearing and repeating such anecdotes.

When George the Fourth died the Duchess of Kent and her little daughter were at Malvern, where the same good-will and admiration for the princess attended them. The simple life of the princess, who appeared almost daily on her donkey as any other young lady of her age might do, the kindly manners of the duchess, the unostentatious gifts to the poor and the distressed in the neighbourhood, were spoken of here as they had been

elsewhere, and doubtless a pleasant holiday was passed amidst the beautiful scenery of Herefordshire and Worcestershire; but it was necessary to return to London, and the time soon arrived when it was thought desirable that the princess should learn in what relation she now stood to the throne, for, as we have seen, the Regency Bill was already before Parliament.

It was not easy to suppose that the knowledge had really been concealed from her; but assiduous care had been exercised to direct the bright intelligence and the young ambition to a disinterested attainment of those qualities and distinctions that fit their possessor for exercising eminent personal influence in any station. Sir Walter Scott, who was one of the honoured visitors at Kensington Palace, had written in his diary on May 19th, 1828: "Dined with the Duchess of Kent. I was very kindly received by Prince Leopold, and presented to the little Princess Victoria, the heir-apparent to the crown, as things now stand. . . . This little lady is educating with much care, and watched so closely that no busy maid has a moment to whisper, 'You are heir of England.' I suspect if we could dissect the little heart, we should find some pigeon or other bird of the air had carried the matter."

This was a reasonable conclusion, but Sir Walter was mistaken. It was not till after the accession of William the Fourth that the secret was told, and for a good many years the manner of its being imparted was the subject of stories more or less conjectural, and mostly representing the Duchess of Kent delivering a stilted didactic discourse to her daughter, somewhat after the manner of examples in *Enfield's Speaker*.

What really took place was made known by the Baroness Lehzen, the old governess, in a letter to the Queen in December, 1867, in which she said: "I ask your Majesty's leave to cite some

remarkable words of your Majesty's when only twelve years old, while the Regency Bill was in progress. I then said to the Duchess of Kent that now, for the first time, your Majesty ought to know your place in the succession. Her royal highness agreed with me, and I put the genealogical table into the historical book. When Mr. Davys [the Queen's instructor, afterwards Bishop of Peterborough] was gone, the Princess Victoria opened as usual the book again, and seeing the additional paper, said, 'I never saw that before.' 'It was not thought necessary you should, princess,' I answered. 'I see I am nearer the throne than I thought.' 'So it is, madam,' I said. After some moments the princess resumed, 'Now, many a child would boast, but they don't know the difficulty. There is much splendour, but there is more responsibility.' The princess having lifted up the forefinger of her right hand while she spoke, gave me that little hand, saying, 'I will be good. I understand now why you urged me so much to learn, even Latin. My aunts Augusta and Mary never did; but you told me Latin is the foundation of English grammar, and of all the elegant expressions, and I learned it as you wished it; but I understand all better now,' and the princess gave me her hand, repeating, 'I will be good!' I then said, 'But your aunt Adelaide is still young and may have children, and of course they would ascend the throne after their father William IV., and not you, princess.' The princess answered, 'And if it was so, I should never feel disappointed, for I know by the love aunt Adelaide bears me, how fond she is of children.'"

This frank and tender reply of the princess is to be associated with her knowledge that her aunt had lost her children, and had written to the Duchess of Kent the few affecting words already noticed in a previous page. In reference to this, the Queen

makes a note upon the letter of the Baroness Lehzen—"I cried much on learning it, and ever deplored this contingency."

With the recognition of the position occupied by the princess came a grant from Parliament of £10,000 a year for her maintenance and education, and the Duchess of Northumberland was appointed governess, which, of course, meant general directress of the princess's studies, and not that the invaluable Baroness Lehzen should be superseded. Her other teachers were mostly English. Mr. Amos instructed her in the elements of constitutional government, Dr. Davys continued his tuition, and music lessons were still given by Mr. Sale, singing was taught by the famous Signor Lablache, dancing by Madame Bourdin, and writing and arithmetic by Mr. Steward, writing-master of Westminster School. In music the princess excelled, as she was not only an excellent singer, but an admirable pianist, and the lessons in drawing which she received from Mr. Westall, R.A., the well-known painter, developed a talent which she has ever since exercised, much to her own pleasure and occasionally to the gratification of those of her subjects who have seen some of the Queen's sketches. In languages the princess had already been well instructed, and those who know what an excellent horsewoman the Queen has always been will not be surprised that she received riding lessons from Mr. Fozard, the most famous teacher of his day.

These studies demanded much time and attention, and the old quiet life was not very materially changed. Though we have referred to a certain loneliness, or a need for youthful companionship in these early days of the young princess, there were, of course, uncles, aunts, and cousins enough to claim recognition, and to increase the number of visitors who were occasionally received at Kensington; and it need scarcely be



said that now there was no longer as much occasion for reticence and seclusion. The princess was already in correspondence with some of her relatives at Coburg, but neither of the cousins there had yet visited London, and the dear old grandmother, the Dowager-duchess of Coburg, was no more to look upon the face of the little May-flower whom she loved so well.

She had written to the Duchess of Kent on the princess's eleventh birthday: "My blessings and good wishes for the day which gave you the sweet blossom of May! May God preserve and protect the valuable life of that lovely flower from all danger that will beset her mind and heart! The rays of the sun are scorching at the height to which she may one day attain. It is only by the blessing of God that all the fine qualities He has put into that young soul can be kept pure and untarnished. How well I can sympathize with the feelings of anxiety that must possess you when that time comes. God, who has helped you through so many bitter hours of grief, will be your help still. Put your trust in Him."

She wrote again in the following June, after the death of George the Fourth: "God bless old England, where my beloved children live, and where the sweet blossom of May may one day reign! May God yet for many years keep the weight of a crown from her young head! and let the intelligent, clever child grow up to girlhood before the dangerous grandeur devolves upon her."

Again, after the provision of the Regency Bill on the 30th of December, 1830: "I should have been very sorry if the regency had been given into other hands than yours. It would not have been a just return for your constant devotion and care to your child if this had not been done. May God give you wisdom and strength to do your duty if called upon to undertake it! May

God bless and protect our little darling! If I could but see her once again! The print you sent me of her is not like the dear picture I have. The quantity of curls hide the well-shaped head, and make it look too large for the lovely little figure."

In the following November (1831) the family at Coburg, the daughter and grand-daughter at South Kensington, and the son at Brussels, had to mourn the loss of this steadfast friend—this loving heart. There were two boy princes at Coburg, Ernest and Albert,—the latter of whom was, as we have seen, born in the same year as the Princess Victoria,—who felt that loss bitterly. Their father, Duke Ernest, was near his mother when she died. Her next son Ferdinand was present also,—but Leopold, the younger and favourite son, last saw her when she visited him at Brussels in the summer, on his election as King of the Belgians. He could not leave the affairs of his new kingdom to attend her in her last hours, nor would his new responsibilities permit him to be so constantly near his little niece in England, to direct and regulate her studies, of which he used previously to receive a weekly report.

CHAPTER II.

The Princess Victoria at Court. State Festivities. Political Excitement. Town and Country. The Iron Duke. The Royal Muddle. The Reform Bill. A Provincial Tour. Court Scandal. Visit of the Coburg Cousins. The Beginning of a Love Match. Coming of Age. Death of William IV. Accession of Victoria. The Coronation.

The princess had now to appear at court and at the various places to which she paid holiday visits, in a new capacity. Little change was made in the simplicity of the domestic life at Kensington, and studies and recreations went on much as usual: nor had the frank, winning manners of the child been lost in the more sedate girlhood: but when she was present on public occasions, or even when she appeared walking or driving, there was just the difference that she was now the acknowledged heir to the throne, and that people regarded her more directly as the future Queen. As we have noted, there was also more "company" at Kensington Palace. Sir John Hobhouse, after dining at the Palace, where the princess was seated at her mother's right hand as in the old days, says, "The young princess was treated in every respect like a grown-up woman, although apparently quite a child. Her manners were very pleasing and natural, and she seemed much amused by some conversation with Lord Durham, a manifest favourite at Kensington. When she left the room, she curtsied round very prettily to all the guests who were present, and then ran out of the room." This would seem to point to the early hours which the princess observed, and there are other references of the same kind at a still later date—one by the poet Moore, who was present at a party when the princess delighted the company by her singing, and would have continued for some

time longer but for premature intimation of bed-time. There is also a record of a ball at which the princess was permitted to be present while on one of the visits to the provinces, but she only graced the occasion for a short time, and after one dance retired at quite an early hour.

The first appearance of the princess at court "in state," was at the "drawing-room" held by Queen Adelaide in February, 1831. It was the Queen's birthday, and therefore there was an additional reason for the presence of the youthful princess, who was already sufficiently self-possessed to stand on the throne on the left of her Majesty, and to note all that took place with evident interest. She was herself probably the chief object of attraction to that brilliant assembly, amidst which her bright, ingenuous face, her beaming blue eyes, and the modest dignity of her bearing consorted well with the simple frock of English blonde over white satin of Spitalfields manufacture, the pearl necklace, and the diamond ornament which fastened the braids of fair hair.

It was the most magnificent drawing-room that had been seen since that which had taken place on the presentation of Princess Charlotte of Wales upon the occasion of her marriage, for it was intended to do honour to the new Queen, and to introduce to her proper place in the royal circle the young maiden who, in simple becoming guise, attended with her mother the Duchess of Kent, her suite consisting of the Duchess of Northumberland, Lady Charlotte St. Maur, Lady Catherine Parkinson, the Hon. Mrs. Cust, the Baroness Lehzen, General Wetherall, and Captain (then Sir John) Conroy, with Lady Conroy.

Before this appearance at the drawing-room, the absence of the princess from the coronation of the King and Queen on the previous September had excited a good deal of remark, and was

the cause of innumerable comments in the newspapers. Of course the world of politics no less than the world of fashion was interested in speculating on the cause of what was set down as the premeditated absence of the princess, and as usual, any interpretation but the simple and obvious one was likely to be adopted. When it was discovered that no place had been assigned to the princess in the ceremony at Westminster Abbey a hundred rumours found tongue. It was the fault of Earl Grey; it was the fault of the Duchess of Northumberland, who was seeking to assert political influence with her pupil; it was the fault of the Duchess of Kent, who refused to allow her daughter to be present because she had herself not been treated with proper respect by the King; it was the fault of Lord Adolphus Fitzclarence, who, in arranging the plan for the procession, had placed the princess last of the royal family, instead of giving her the proper place immediately after their Majesties.

These were the reports which were circulated, until a simple explanation was given by the announcement that the sanction of the King had been obtained for the absence of his niece from a ceremony, the fatigue and excitement of which it was believed would be injurious to her health. Here was another topic of discussion: all kinds of forebodings were indulged in, and a temporary indisposition or, at worst, a slight declension of strength, which made it necessary to avoid the excitement and exhaustion caused by repeated state ceremonials, was magnified into a report of symptoms betokening some inherent weakness or constitutional defect

The Duchess of Kent was, for more than one reason, reluctant to see her daughter drawn into the court atmosphere, and she had repeatedly to run the risk of offending the King, and perhaps even of seeming to slight the kindness always

displayed by the Queen, because of her determination that the child, who had been reared with so much care, should not sacrifice domestic peace and order, and the education which was to raise her above the ordinary court measure, by being at her early age committed to the intrigues, the slanders, and, it may be added, the contaminations of those who would have endeavoured to secure an influence over her. Such a result neither the King nor the Queen might have perceived till it was too late to prevent it, though the King would certainly have resented it as he afterwards resented the infrequency of his niece's visits. At anyrate the Princess Victoria, instead of taking part in the coronation and the subsequent festivities, was quietly pursuing her studies. In the following autumn (1831) the Duchess of Kent went with her household to the Isle of Wight, where they occupied Norris Castle, near East Cowes, which was from that time retained as a marine residence, and where they were removed from the rioting and disturbances which shook not London only, but the great provincial towns, during the excitement caused by the opposition to the Reform Bill.

The coronation ceremony had not been of a very splendid character, as compared with that of George the Fourth, which had become historical not only for its extravagant cost (£268,000), but because of the attempts of the unhappy Queen Caroline to assert her rights by seeking to force her way into Westminster Abbey, from which she had been excluded. Yet the quiet celebration of investing William the Fourth and Queen Adelaide with the insignia of royalty involved an expense of over £43,000, of which £22,234 was for the several departments of the household, and £12,000 for the office of works for fitting up Westminster Abbey, &c., while £3034 was

spent in fireworks and for opening the theatres to the public on the night of the coronation.

The King and Queen spent a good deal of their time at Windsor, and brilliant court festivities were not very numerous; but the King was remarkably fond of giving dinner parties, at which it is not surprising that the Duchess of Kent and her daughter were seldom to be seen. We hear, however, of some important state assemblies where the Princess Victoria was present, and, indeed, more than one was given in her honour by Queen Adelaide. The principal of these was a grand ball given on the 24th of May, 1832, to celebrate the thirteenth birthday of the princess, who was much impressed by the brilliant scene which she now witnessed for the first time, but amidst which she moved with the frank grace that was habitual to her, and with a modest self-possession which even in those early days seems to have enabled her to sustain her part in all such ceremonial assemblies, and preserved her from any appearance of disadvantage, notwithstanding her youth and inexperience. Doubtless her attractive appearance and behaviour caused the dissatisfaction expressed by the King at the comparative seclusion in which she was educated. He grumbled that she was not more at court, and every time he saw her the grievance was emphasized by his perceiving that, to use a common phrase, she "would be a credit to him," though he appeared to lose sight of the credit due to the Duchess of Kent. To her judicious care, and her reluctance to subject the "May-flower" to the blighting influences of a court circle, were largely due the natural ingenuous address which delighted the Sailor King, and was probably far more keenly appreciated by his gentle Queen. When the King went to prorogue his first Parliament the Queen had invited her niece to see the state procession, and,

standing in the balcony, was perceived by the crowd below, who raised a hearty cheer. The kind lady took the little girl by the hand and led her to the front of the balcony to share in the homage of the people, and this may be said to have been the first official introduction of the princess as immediate heir to the crown. In January, 1831, too, the princess had appeared, for the first time, at the theatre—Covent Garden—where she witnessed the entertainment with evident pleasure.

Not only the manner of her education, but the disposition and appearance of the Princess Victoria were pretty well known to the public, and the just reasons for her comparative seclusion at that early age were also understood. A correspondent of the *Mirror*, in the later months of 1831, says: "The heiress presumptive to the British crown is gradually becoming an object of great interest to all classes of her future subjects . . . and it is well known that no mother has more anxiously studied to inculcate on her daughter's mind a due sense of moral and religious duties, and the practice of kindliness, gentleness, and forbearance to all those about her, than has the Duchess of Kent towards her precious charge. Her studies have been pursued with as unremitting attention as her health would bear: she is quick in acquiring languages, and speaks fluently English, French, and German, is well read in history, and has attained such perfection in music as to be able to take part in the private concerts frequently given by the Duchess of Kent, who is herself extremely fond of music. Many contradictory reports of the state of her health have been spread, arising, possibly, from the physician of the household paying her regular visits for form's sake, and to satisfy the duchess's natural anxiety. We know, however, from good authority, that the princess's health is satisfactory, and the exuberance of her spirits is a

sufficient proof of there being no cause for alarm on this head. . . . Her disposition is spoken very favourably of, and her good humour never fails her, though she is not much in the habit of associating with young ladies of her own age, but leads, on the whole, a secluded life. From everything that is known, therefore, of this interesting young personage during her yet short career, there is every reason to induce us to look with confidence to the day when she will be called on to wield the sceptre of the most powerful empire in the known world."

With the personal appearance of the princess a few of those who had not seen her had gained some knowledge from pictures and engravings. Mr. Fowler, an artist at Ramsgate, had painted two portraits of her, one of which, completed in her ninth year, was sent for exhibition to the Royal Academy, but was rejected. There was some correspondence on the subject between the president, Sir Thomas Lawrence, and the Duchess of Kent, who considered that, with one exception, the portrait was the best likeness of her daughter which had then been accomplished, the exception being a very fine bust by Behnes, which is now to be seen at Windsor Castle. An oil-painting of the duchess seated on a sofa, on which her little daughter stood beside her, had been made for the King of the Belgians by Sir William Beechey; and there was a bust of the infant princess by Turnerelli, the sculptor, the father of a gentleman who more recently became conspicuous in relation to some rather remarkable endeavours to raise a popular testimonial to Lord Beaconsfield. The most satisfactory likeness of a later date, however, was the full-length portrait painted by Mr. Westall, R.A., her instructor in drawing, when the princess was in her twelfth year.

On the 28th of May, 1832, four days after the birthday

ball, we hear of the princess at her second "drawing-room," and then of her retirement till the summer, when she accompanied the duchess on a tour, which continued during the autumn, through some of the most attractive historical and picturesque portions of England and Wales, a journey designed to serve the higher purpose of education as well as to delight the imagination—to maintain the health of the princess, at the same time that it removed her and the household from the disquieting influences of that political crisis, of which it is necessary to note some of the circumstances, since they will have associations with subsequent pages of the present narrative.

After the coronation of William the Fourth there had been no immediate change in the government, but the administration presided over by the Duke of Wellington was detested by the people, and had to sustain not only the powerful opposition of both Radicals and Whigs, who were pledged to support the urgent demand for reform, but also the demands of extreme Tories, who seemed determined to oppose to the uttermost a government which had granted Catholic emancipation. All over the country ministerialists were defeated, and a number of the successful candidates were ardent representatives of popular rights. The scenes at the elections were more violent than anybody has seen on similar occasions during the past fifty years; for the riot and confusion at the hustings and at polling places before the passage of the Reform Bill could not be imagined by the present generation; and when the country was eager to assert its dissatisfaction with the government the tumult was so exaggerated that it became alarming evidence of the probability of further demonstrations of a very dangerous kind. The result of the general election, however, was that the ministry lost about fifty votes in the House of Commons, and that the

reformers were victorious, in many places where the power and influence of the government were set against them.

On the 2d of November, 1830, the King had opened Parliament in person, and the address in reply passed, but not without some allusions to the subject of reform; in the House of Commons by Brougham, and in the Lords by Earl Grey. The Duke of Wellington took up the matter without hesitation, and concluded his remarks by saying, "I am not only not prepared to bring forward any measure of this nature, but I will at once declare that, as far as I am concerned, as long as I hold any station in the government of this country, I shall always feel it my duty to resist such a measure when proposed by others."

This was quite characteristic of "the Iron Duke," for he was a man of "unbending" opinions, one of which was that in this country, where property of various descriptions required to be protected, and where, to sum up what he conceived to be his political duty in his own phrase, the matter of the first importance was "to carry on the King's government," no better form of legislation could possibly be devised than that which already existed. This was in effect what he actually said, and when he concluded by avowing his determination to resist any suggestion of reform in the parliamentary representation of the country, his declaration meant war, and was taken as such. The ministry of which he was the head was not likely to last long after that, but he was not a man to yield at once.

It will show how strongly the unsympathetic feeling between the duke in his ministerial capacity, and the representatives of those who desired political progress and out-and-out reform was accentuated, if we recall the fact that when Wellington was appointed prime-minister Henry Brougham, in a remarkable speech, said, among other things, that the appointment was

unconstitutional. This was, of course, an extreme statement, but was explained, after he had expressed the greatest respect for the duke's illustrious character and abilities, by his saying that he could not feel gratified to see the regular and confidential adviser of the crown at the head of the civil and military establishments, dispensing all the patronage of the crown, the army, and the church. It was in this speech that there occurred the remarkable passage which introduced the phrase of "the schoolmaster abroad." "Let it not be supposed," said Brougham, "that I am inclined to exaggerate. I have no fear of slavery being introduced into this country by the power of the sword. . . . The noble duke might take the army, he might take the navy, he might take the mitre, he might take the seal—I would make the noble duke a present of them all. Let him come with his whole force, sword in hand, against the constitution, and the energies of the people will not only beat him, but laugh at his efforts. There have been periods when this country has heard with dismay that the soldier was abroad. This is not the case now. Let the soldier be ever so much abroad in the present age, he can do nothing. There is another person abroad—a less imposing person, and in the eyes of some an insignificant person—whose labours have tended to produce this state of things. The *schoolmaster is abroad*, and I trust more to the schoolmaster, armed with his primer, for upholding the liberties of the country, than I fear the soldier with his bayonet."

There is something enormously significant in this—as an indication not only of the "situation" at that date, but of the signs of the times. But Wellington never pushed his convictions to such an extreme as to carry compulsion against the evident will of the nation. He has been debited with saying that the people would be quiet, and that if they did not keep quiet

there was a way to make them; but if he said so he never meant by it a forcible opposition to the unmistakable demands of the country. He and Peel were ready to accept accomplished facts, after having these facts hammered into them so that they were beyond dispute, and the grand old soldier grew simply eloquent when, in spite of his previous honest convictions and prejudices, he had to yield intellectual and even moral consent to a course which he saw was inevitable, and not only to retreat himself but to take others with him, including the King. Probably Wellington never quite realized that he was not a highly capable minister, well acquainted with the theory of government, but he modified a good deal as he grew older, when his autocratic notions had sobered down before the conviction that the forces of public opinion could not be beaten—that the armies he had to encounter were not those of the enemies of the country abroad, and that, in fact, the government would have to be carried on without him, or in spite of his former theories.

Peel, as most middle-aged people know, was the son of a cotton manufacturer, or rather of a calico-printer, in a very large way of business, as many as 15,000 hands having been employed in his father's factories at one time. The elder Peel was exceedingly wealthy, and was made a baronet (so Cobbett declared), because he contributed £10,000 to the "Loyalty Loan," which was the Royal Patriotic Fund of his day. He was in Parliament, where he distinguished himself as a thorough-going Tory, and his elder son Robert, who was a steady and studious lad at Harrow, and afterwards took a "double-first" at Oxford, was also returned to the House while still little more than a youth, and almost immediately took office with the near prospect of a place in the cabinet. In 1830 he had succeeded to the title and a large fortune and estate on the death of his father. Sir Robert

Peel would never accept any honorary distinctions on his own behalf, putting all such offers aside with a manner which appeared to be an almost haughty intimation that he considered they would add nothing to his dignity or social position. He was a man of scrupulous honour and integrity, much sensitiveness and humanity, and with great tenacity of opinion, which did not, however, prevent him from holding broad and generous views, or from being open to conviction. It may easily be understood that such a man would be cherished by the Duke of Wellington, who was much inferior to him in high culture and true breadth of perception.

Everybody was ready to give homage to the duke as the great general who had broken the power of France, but popular demonstrations against him as head of the government became so violent that it would have been almost impossible for him to have continued to hold office. Brougham had announced an intention to introduce a measure dealing with parliamentary reform, and approved by a large number of members, but the day before he was to bring it forward Sir Henry Parnell moved for the appointment of a select committee to consider the estimates on the civil list, and as this was carried against the government by a majority of twenty the ministry took the opportunity of sending in their resignation.

The King at once sent for Earl Grey, whose high character and consistent advocacy of moderate reform, no less than his ability and experience, made him the head of the Whig party, and the new ministry was soon completed, on the clear understanding that a measure for an extensive reform in Parliament should be at once introduced, and that in the prosecution of his plan for effecting it the prime-minister should receive the King's countenance and support. The Whigs had not been

in office for five-and-twenty years, and now was the opportunity for carrying a measure the demand for which was shown by political demonstrations in various parts of the country. Henry Brougham was made lord-chancellor with the title of Lord Brougham and Vaux, but he hesitated at first to accept it, for he preferred to be free as a leader of the party of independence, and he had such a splendid practice at the bar that the emoluments of the office of lord-chancellor were not much temptation. He had to be persuaded to accept it by Lord Althorp (son of Earl Spencer), one of the most disinterested men living, who became chancellor of the exchequer. The Hon. E. G. Stanley, afterwards to become famous as the Earl of Derby—"the Rupert of debate"—was appointed chief secretary for Ireland, but failed to be elected for Preston because he refused to pledge himself to support vote by ballot. Lord Melbourne, a rather neutral friend of reform and by no means anxious for the promotion of an extensive measure in that direction, was home secretary; Viscount Palmerston, foreign secretary; the Marquis of Lansdowne, president of the council; Sir James Graham, first lord of the admiralty; and Lord John Russell paymaster of the forces, without a seat in the cabinet.

The work of framing the government measure of reform was assigned to a committee composed of Lord Durham, Lord Duncannon, Sir J. Graham, and Lord John Russell; but it was the scheme of Lord John Russell which was the foundation of the bill. This was as it should have been for more reasons than one. Lord John was the representative of the great historical Whig family, and was a consistent upholder of principles that were at that time in advance of those of many of his own political associates. His speech and manner displayed the quality of caution more than of temerity; for he seldom

rose to a display of eloquence; often hesitated for the right word, though he seldom used a wrong one; was never brilliant, but never either tried or pretended to be so, and mostly spoke sensibly and much to the purpose. When, in addition to his negative qualities, it is remembered that he was rather plain-looking, so short as to be almost dwarfish in person, with a large head, hidden mostly by a large hat slouched down over his forehead, so that when he sat in the House of Commons little could be seen of his face but his mouth, which bore an expression of dry humour; it may be wondered at that he was for the greater part of his long career a popular man, and at the time we are now considering, when he was still comparatively young, the best liked of the leaders of the cause of reform. He had always been a consistent Liberal; he had carried the repeal of the hated Test and Corporation Acts in the teeth of the Wellington government. He was a man of honesty and integrity and with strong religious principles, and an advocate for religious freedom, and the traditions of the noble family to which he belonged, joined with a kindly recognition of his earnest political convictions, caused the people to like and to trust him. "Little Johnny," as he was too often irreverently designated—or Lord John, as he was quite familiarly called—was always true to his colours, and mostly had a good following; though he was as little as possible like Brougham, who, at the time of the Reform Bill of 1832, made speeches so vigorous, varied, and defiant of opposing powers, that they were read with boundless delight by "the masses."

On the 1st of March Lord John Russell was to bring forward the bill, and the House of Commons, its lobbies, passages, and approaches, were crowded to excess. As the clock struck six a little active figure—a calm, pale, determined face—appeared entering the house. There was a momentary hush, and then

followed a tremendous cheer; then, amidst a profound silence, Lord John commenced an exposition of the bill, which he declared was founded on the ancient constitution of the country, which declared that no man should be taxed for the support of the state who had not consented, by himself or his representative, to the imposition of these taxes. That reform was a matter of right and of reason, as well as of policy and expediency, he unhesitatingly asserted. A stranger who was told that this country was unparalleled in wealth and industry, and more civilized and more enlightened than any country was before it,—that it was a country that prided itself on its freedom, and that once in every seven years it elected representatives from its population to act as the guardians and preservers of that freedom,—would be anxious and curious to see how that representation was formed, and how the people chose their representatives, to whose faith and guardianship they intrusted their free and liberal institutions. Such a person would be very astonished if he were taken to a ruined mound and told that that mound sent two representatives to Parliament; if he were taken to a stone wall, and told that three niches in it sent two representatives to Parliament; if he were taken to a park where no houses were to be seen, and told that that park sent two representatives to Parliament; but if he were told all this, and were astonished at hearing it, he would be still more astonished if he were to see large and opulent towns, full of enterprise, and industry, and intelligence, containing vast magazines of every species of manufacture, and were then told that these towns sent no representatives to Parliament. Such a person would be still more astonished if he were taken to Liverpool, where there was a large constituency, and told, "Here you will have a fine specimen of a popular election." He would

see bribery employed to the greatest extent, and in the most unblushing manner; he would see every voter receiving a number of guineas in a box as the price of his corruption; and after such a spectacle he would, no doubt, be much astonished that a nation whose representatives were thus chosen could perform the functions of legislation at all, or enjoy respect in any degree.

This was the prefatory appeal, and it indicates tersely, but sufficiently, the conditions for which a reformation was being demanded. There is no need in these pages to give an exposition of the various parts of the measure which was then proposed. The number of persons who would be entitled to the suffrage under the bill not previously possessing that right was supposed to be, in the counties, 110,000; in the towns, 50,000; in London, 95,000; in Scotland, 50,000; in Ireland, about 40,000; and it was believed that the measure would add to the constituency of the Commons House of Parliament about half a million of persons, all connected with the property of the country, having a stake in it, and deeply interested in its institutions. The number of members of the house would be decreased by 62, the number of representative constituencies from 658 to 596, as 168 seats which were to be abolished by disfranchisement of boroughs would not be compensated by the additions effected by redistribution, or the accession of representation in other places.

The debate on the bill was long, and members of the opposition set themselves to impede the progress of the measure, which they succeeded in doing for fifteen months, during which not only the ministry but Parliament itself underwent repeated vicissitudes, while the country was kept continually disturbed by riots and deeds of violence. On the 14th of March the bill was read for the first time. The second reading was moved

on the 21st of March, and was carried by one vote only. The excitement in and out of the House was tremendous; but no more could be done till after the Easter recess, when Parliament reassembled on the 12th of April. Then General Gascoyne moved an instruction that the number of members ought not to be diminished, which Lord Althorp said was the first of a series of obstructions, but after an acrimonious discussion it passed by a majority of eight.

The opposition thought that they had effectually "mated," if not checkmated, the ministry, for the countercheck was the dissolution of Parliament, and it was known that the King, who was by no means so "patriotic" as to desire as wide a measure of reform as that represented by the bill, had a great aversion to this alternative.

An address was being prepared in the House of Lords asking him not to dissolve Parliament. There was no time to lose, and Brougham was equal to the occasion. He went at once to his Majesty and urged him to go down to the House of Lords and exercise his royal authority by announcing a dissolution. The King was in a dilemma. He could not sacrifice the ministry after the promises that he had made to support them in the measure that they now sought to carry through Parliament by an appeal to the country, and yet he disliked the appearance of committing himself to the provisions of the bill. There was no compromise; and though he would have liked to "run with the hare and hunt with the hounds," it was in this instance impossible; or, as he afterwards said, incompatible with his character as a sovereign and a gentleman. He was next angry with the Lords, who were preparing to petition him against a dissolution; and hurrying on his robes he called out, "Bring me a hackney-coach," as though he had

no time left even to wait for the royal carriage. But the royal carriage was soon ready, and off he went in semi-state, the Life Guards riding wide as an escort; the people in the streets huzzaing with a demonstrative energy that for the time reminded him he had done the right thing for maintaining his popularity.

The House of Lords was in a tumult when the King entered, and the disturbance was barely hushed to listen to his Majesty when he said that he had come to prorogue Parliament prior to a dissolution. Parliament was dissolved the next day, and the public rejoicings were sufficient to prove to the anti-reformers that there would be a fierce struggle at the elections. There were illuminations in the city and in many parts of the West End: which, however, was no decisive sign of political satisfaction, since it was pretty well known to householders that unless they exhibited lighted lamps or candles in their windows the mob outside would probably smash every pane of glass. This took place at the houses of known anti-reformers, who would not illuminate; and at Apsley House, the residence of the Duke of Wellington, not only was every pane of glass that looked upon the streets ruthlessly demolished by showers of stones, but a yelling mob remained for a long time uttering execrations, for which the duke probably cared little, though he afterwards had his mended windows provided with external shutters of iron.

When the elections came on there were truer and nobler signs that numbers of people were in earnest, though in the fourteen days during which the poll continued enormous sums of money were spent in bribing and treating, and the scenes of riot and disorder, in which crowds filled the streets and processions marched hither and thither with bands and banners, were made the more feverishly exciting by the unusual heat of the weather.

Parliament opened on the 14th of June, and on the 24th Lord John Russell again brought forward the bill, which, with some modifications of details, was read without opposition. The second reading was fixed for the 4th of July, and again a vast and expectant crowd filled the house and all its approaches. The debate lasted for three nights, and at five o'clock on the morning of the 7th the measure was carried by a majority of 136, and then went into committee. It was not till the morning of the 22d of September that the bill passed by 345 votes against 239, and then the question was, What will the Lords do? Solemnly Lord Althorp and Lord John Russell, followed by a hundred reformers, carried the bill to the bar of the Upper House. Solemnly it was received; but in spite of the serious and dignified appeals of Earl Grey and the impassioned eloquence of Lord Brougham, it was thrown out. Lord Eldon and Lord Lyndhurst and other anti-reforming peers had already made up their minds against "the revolutionary violence of the measure." Wellington was, of course, immovable; the bishops were against it, and by a considerable majority it was rejected.

The news went through the country like flame. In London and other large towns the shops were closed, the church bells were muffled, everywhere meetings were held, and violent speeches were made in all parts of the country. At one of these meetings 100,000 persons were present, and a resolution was passed to pay no more taxes till the bill became law, and this example was afterwards followed elsewhere. The common council of the city of London held a meeting at Guildhall in favour of the measure, and there was another assembly of leading merchants and bankers at the Mansion House. The corporation voted an address to the King, and

it was carried up attended by 50,000 people, the lower sort among whom again vented their fury by attacking Apsley House, and committing other acts of violence.

On the 20th of October the King again went down and prorogued Parliament, delivering a conciliatory speech, which referred to the general manifestation of a desire for constitutional reform in the Commons' House of Parliament, to the certain direction of the attention of the next Parliament to the question, and to his unaltered desire to promote its settlement. The violence of public meetings somewhat abated, but the political organizations became more formidable, and their proceedings were declared to be illegal. There was indeed reason for alarm, for in various parts of the country the riots had approached to attempted revolution. At Nottingham the castle, which was the property of the Duke of Newcastle—an extreme Tory—was fired and destroyed.

The Bristol riots were still more serious in their results, for the whole town was terrorized by a furious and madly drunken mob, who sacked and burned numbers of houses, destroyed furniture and valuables which were thrown from the windows, and ruined a great many respectable people by the wanton destruction or seizure of their property, and the casual sale of their valuable effects in the public streets. A mob of the vilest miscreants, under the pretence of a political demonstration, set up an insurrection of brigandage, and would have destroyed the whole city, while the military officer in command of the troops sent to quell the riot would do nothing effectually to prevent these atrocities. The arrival of an officer of a different stamp put an end to the riot after a great slaughter, in which five hundred wretched creatures were killed, and hundreds wounded: nor could any other remedy have been applied, for the mob had

by that time taken possession of a quarter of the town where they prepared a desperate resistance to the troops and the thousands of sturdy constables enrolled from the crews of merchant ships and the respectable inhabitants of the city

But there were meetings which, by their orderly organization and peaceable but intense earnestness, were immeasurably more effectual as demonstrations than any display of unreasoning violence. Such was the great Midland meeting at Birmingham, at which there were present 150,000 men, with 200 bands of music and 700 flags. Assembled at the foot or on the lower slope of Newhall Hill, this vast multitude was hushed to silence as they heard a trumpet blown—a signal that they were to unite in singing:

Lo! we answer! see we come,
Quick at freedom's holy call,
We come! we come! we come! we come!
To do the glorious work of all:
And hark! we raise from sea to sea
The sacred watchword, Liberty!

God is our guide! from field, from wave,
From plough, from anvil, and from loom,
We come our country's rights to save,
And speak a tyrant faction's doom.
And hark! we raise from sea to sea
The sacred watchword, Liberty!

God is our guide! no swords we draw,
We kindle not war's battle-fires;
But union, justice, reason, law
We claim, the birthright of our sires;
We raise the watchword, Liberty!
We will, we will, we will be free!

We have scarcely improved upon this kind of national song

or hymn in later times. Without committing ourselves to political opinions, we may acknowledge that it is more real, more earnest and impressive than most of the "patriotic" productions of the present day, whether they invoke Juggernaut or Jingo. But these men were seriously and reasonably in earnest; they knew what they wanted; they wanted nothing that was subversive of law and order.

That they thought the aspect of affairs was serious—serious for political and civil liberty—may be gathered from the fact that after singing the "national hymn" the multitude, with uncovered heads, followed a fugleman in reciting a vow or declaration:—"With unbroken faith, through every peril and privation, we here devote ourselves and our children to our country's cause." There could, perhaps, be no better proof of the sober reasonableness of their intentions than the fact that a fortnight afterwards, when there was a promise of the crisis being over and a belief that the ministry would carry the bill, these 150,000 men again met on Newhall Hill and united in solemn thanksgiving.

A very great deal had happened in that fortnight. The ministry saw that there was but one course for them beside resignation, and they were pledged to the country not to resign while there was any other course open. It was evident either that the King must create as many new peers as would suffice to make a majority for the bill, or the Lords must give way. During nine days when there was no ministry there was little business done. Crowds and knots of persons were everywhere discussing the situation; the King's head, wherever it appeared on a signboard, was covered with crape, and that of the poor Queen, who was suspected of high Tory principles, was smeared with lampblack. The National Union petitioned the

House of Commons to refuse supplies and to put the exchequer in commission. O'Connell, who was an ardent reformer, and went for manhood suffrage and vote by ballot as well as for the repeal of the Union, was addressing vast assemblies in London; so also were Sir De Lacy Evans and Mr. Hume. There was a general cry to "stop the duke," and to run on the bank for gold. Members taking up petitions for stopping supplies were charged to say that no more taxes would be paid until the bill had passed. It was reported that the Unionists were preparing to march on London. The country was turning against the King himself. He was hooted, and the newspapers contained insulting references to him; dirt was flung at his carriage, and the guards had to ride close for his protection. There was nothing for it but to recall the ministry.

The result of their return was the abandonment of the King's objections to increase the peerage, but there was no need to put the prerogative in force. The peers gave way, many of the opponents of the bill remaining absent from the house, and after some amendments, which were agreed to by the Commons, the great measure was adopted. The King would not give his assent to the bill in person, but on the 7th of June (1832) it received the royal assent by commission, and a new political era had begun.

Events moved apace, and in 1834, after a period of enthusiastic public meetings and great debating in Parliament, slavery was abolished in all the British dominions, and the enormous sum of £20,000,000 was paid to the West India planters as compensation. Great advances had already been made in other directions, and the years 1830–1834 were a period of great ecclesiastical and religious as well as philanthropic activity. In 1831 the "Congregational Union of

England and Wales" was founded, Dissenters were actively and vigorously forming various societies for missionary and educational effort, and "Exeter Hall" became a power. In 1834 the Wesleyan Methodist association was founded, and in 1833, while the Whigs' had abolished ten bishoprics of the Established Church, what was known as the Tractarian movement began to show signs of organization at Oxford. The repeal of the Test and Corporation Acts had not removed all disabilities from Nonconformists, and the grotesque but not absurd declarations of Sydney Smith, the witty canon, in his *Plymley Letters*, were even yet not out of date. "When a country squire hears of an ape his first feeling is to give it nuts and apples; when he hears of a dissenter his immediate impulse is to commit it to the county jail, to shave its head, to alter its customary food, and to have it privately whipped." The country was getting beyond this, and civil and religious freedom went hand in hand with political and social reform, while earnest endeavours were also made to establish schools and advance education, though no truly national system was yet within measurable distance.

The clouds that had obscured the horizon were breaking—were, in fact, opening wide and disappearing before a light that was increasing in brilliancy and benign power, and the whole national atmosphere was stirring with a freer and purer air. This may be said of the physical atmosphere also. In the autumn of 1831, the storm and tumult of political strife was followed by the threatened subversion of law and order by those who incited to riot and rapine, and "the arrow that flieth by day" took greater terrors because the "pestilence that walketh in darkness," the cholera, was here.

At the time that the infuriated mob was assailing Apsley

House, and all London was in a ferment of heat, strife, and anger, the disease, against which the doctors seemed to strive in vain, was causing a terrible rise in the death-rate. There was scarcely a neighbourhood in which some of the poorer inhabitants were not stricken, and patients were borne along the streets to the hospitals in covered stretchers, on the approach of which the knots of people, gathered to discuss the news or to declaim about the Reform Bill and the duke, would hurry out of the way, many of them sniffing at camphor or holding handkerchiefs to their faces.

But even the cholera brought its lessons. Not only was there a decidedly perceptible increase in the attendance at churches and chapels, and a greater seriousness in relation to religious observances, but investigations and some practical improvements were made for the purpose of promoting better sanitary measures in streets and houses. Parts of London and other large towns continued to be undrained or badly drained, and the cesspool was not abolished for many years afterwards, but the subject of public health was receiving more attention.

These more prominent events of the time at which the Princess Victoria became the recognized heir to the throne demand to be briefly noted, that we may intelligently follow the course of the narrative of a life that had then become dearer to and more closely identified with the national interests and the national progress. Though, of course, neither the Duchess of Kent nor her young daughter could take any conspicuous part in public events, and there were obvious reasons for preserving that unostentatious manner of living which guarded them from an appearance of challenging public attention, the princess was, as we have seen, sufficiently "in evidence" to mark her

new relationship to the court, though by no means sufficiently to satisfy the King.

We may note also that the birthday ball and the drawing-room were held at the time when a tremendous political conflict was going on in London, and the whole country was stirred with the question of the action of the Lords in relation to the Reform Bill. The princess must surely have witnessed symptoms of the general excitement; and, without doubt, the surging of the wave of popular commotion was heard at Kensington Palace, even if a dash of the spray was not felt in a place where a good deal of company was now occasionally seen, and which the Duke of Sussex had in some sense identified with "advanced" liberal opinions.

But when the Reform Bill had passed, and the King and Queen had retired to Windsor, the young princess with her mother went on that pleasant tour through some of the most attractive districts of England and Wales which has been already mentioned,—an excursion which included visits to the mansions of many English noblemen, to those stately houses where the youthful princess was a welcome and a most distinguished guest.

It would be easy to fill the page with suggestions of the vivid sentiments and pleasant imaginings which were probably awakened by historical scenes and buildings, by ancient mansion and cathedral, by quaint and picturesque towns, by mouldering ruins, by busy scenes of industry, and sequestered woods and vales, where the very stones and trees had long been themes of song and story, or landmarks of the by-ways of historic lore. It would be easier still to follow the journey of the princess, and repeat the legend or the chronicle with which each place is associated; but it was neither a guide-book excursion nor a royal

progress. The effect of such a tour on the quick and inquiring intelligence of the princess was doubtless emphasized by the reception that she met with, by some public signs of welcome, by ceremonies such as the opening of a bridge or a building, and by addresses presented to the Duchess of Kent; but it will be sufficient to indicate these without giving them a prominent place in the narrative.

The journey was first to North Wales, and there the princess enjoyed her first experience of mountain scenery, remaining for some time amidst the most charming localities of the country before proceeding through Coventry and Shrewsbury, and visiting Powis Castle, Wynnstay, and Beaumaris, where her royal highness was present at the national musical and bardic contest—the Eisteddfod—and presented the prizes to the successful competitors. At Anglesey the royal visitor and her mother were the guests of General the Marquis of Anglesey (Henry William Paget), who had led the final charge against the French guards at Waterloo, and had received a wound in the knee which cost him his leg. From his mansion at Plas Newydd the distinguished party went to spend a day at Eaton Hall, the seat of the Marquis of Westminster, and thence to Oakley Park, near Ludlow, the home of the Clive family, near relatives of the Duchess of Northumberland, the governess of the princess. Returning by Chester they stayed for two or three days at the quaint, picturesque old city, a place full of interest, where they were received by the bishop on their visit to the cathedral. In her reply to an address presented by his grace, the Duchess of Kent said: "I cannot better allude to your good feelings towards the princess than by joining fervently in the wish that she may set an example in her conduct of that piety towards God, and charity towards men, which is the only

sure foundation either of individual happiness or national prosperity." The princess named a new bridge which was opened at Chester during her stay, but it was called the "Grosvenor" bridge, the duchess cautiously refraining from giving permission for it to be named the "Victoria."

A short stay was made at Chatsworth, the superb residence of the Cavendishes, Alton Abbey, the seat of Lord Shrewsbury, Hardwick Hall, Shugborough, the seat of the Earl of Lichfield, and the old city of Lichfield, with its fine cathedral where "The Sleeping Children," Chantrey's beautiful sculpture, delighted the princess, to whom, even while she was herself an infant, babies and little children had always been so great an attraction.

From Chatsworth a visit had been paid to Belper in Derbyshire, to the famous cotton mills of the Messrs. Strutt, and there Mr. James Strutt had explained to the princess by means of a model the various processes of cotton spinning. In this the young visitor took most intelligent interest, and it is not too much to say that the opportunity afforded by the journey, and those provincial tours which succeeded it, to make acquaintance with great industrial enterprises, and the occupations of mechanics and operatives, was the beginning of a new bond of interest between the future sovereign and the people, which afterwards enabled her to mix with more complete freedom and mutual good understanding with her subjects, and to take keen personal concern in the progress of those inventions and manufactures upon which the vast commercial prosperity of the country so much depends. Her royal highness was greatly pleased with the enthusiastic reception given her by the workpeople at Belper, and they were equally delighted, for this was the first royal visit ever paid to a cotton mill. It may be men-

tioned here that in 1856 the son of Mr. James Strutt received the dignity of a peerage with the title of Baron Belper.

It is recorded that the nailers and iron-workers of Bromsgrove were also visited while the princess was in Worcestershire, and that she was specially delighted with a present made to her by the workmen of a thousand minute examples of nails of various patterns inclosed in a quill contained in a small gold box.

Of course there were addresses, receptions, and various ceremonial signs of welcome, to all of which the duchess replied on behalf of the princess. There was a rare round of visits: the Earl of Plymouth, and the Earl of Liverpool, a good friend of the Duchess of Kent, from whose abode at Pitchford Hall they went to quaint old historical Shrewsbury, both received the welcome guests, who reached Woodstock on the 7th of November, and stayed till next day at Wytham with the Earl of Abingdon. On the following day they went over to Oxford, their entrance to the great university city being attended by an escort of yeomanry. The celebrities of the university, the professors, dons, and doctors, assembled in the Sheldonian Theatre to receive the princess with hearty enthusiasm, and there the vice-chancellor presented an address, to which in her reply the Duchess of Kent said: "We close a most interesting journey by a visit to this university that the princess may see, as far as her years will allow, all that is interesting in it. The history of our country has taught her to know its importance by the many distinguished persons who, by their character and talents, have been raised to eminence by the education they have received in it. Your loyalty to the King, and recollection of the favour you have enjoyed under the paternal sway of his house, could not fail, I was sure, to lead you to receive his niece with all the

disposition you evince to make this visit agreeable and instructive to her. It is my object to ensure by all means in my power her being so educated as to meet the just expectation of all classes in this great and free country."

The present of a magnificent Bible from the university press, and an account of her visit printed on white satin, added to the pleasure she had experienced in seeing the beautiful halls and colleges, the churches, and the treasures of the Bodleian and Radclyffe libraries. It was a fitting termination to a remarkable and instructive tour. On the 9th of November the faces of the travellers were set homewards, and they once more reached Kensington—after a journey which, we should remember, was made by road, for there were yet no railways, no special trains and royal saloon carriages.

The excursions in the following autumn (1833) were confined to places on the south coast, which were visited while the household were occupying Norris Castle, in the Isle of Wight. They even went as far as Plymouth and Torquay, where the princess evinced an unmistakable liking for the sea and an interest in everything relating to maritime affairs. At Norris Castle the old simple mode of life was renewed, and long walks, drives, and visits to the scenery of the island were among the pleasures that were most enjoyed; but trips were frequently made by sea in the yacht *Emerald*, which was retained for the princess. The Duchess of Kent was, as she said in reply to addresses at Plymouth and elsewhere, anxious that her daughter should visit the various places that were associated with the marine importance of the country; and it should be noticed that, in order to carry out this part of the education of the princess, as well as to give her what soon became a great pleasure, that of making sailing excursions to some distance, the careful mother

had to exercise much self-denial, for she was by no means "a good sailor," and frequently had to suffer great inconvenience and discomfort that she might accompany the princess in these voyages.

It was while returning from the Eddystone on board the *Emerald* that an accident placed the princess in very serious danger, from which she was rescued by the presence of mind of the pilot, Mr. Saunders. It was rather brisk weather, and the princess was on deck when a mast was sprung and heard to crack. The pilot saw that the topmast was likely to come down near the spot where her royal highness was standing, and, as there was no time for ceremony, darted to the spot and carried her aft out of harm's way. The next moment the top-mast fell crashing on the deck at the spot from which she had been removed, and where she would in all probability have been killed but for the presence of mind of Mr. Saunders, to whom the princess with much emotion expressed her gratitude for his prompt and timely action. It need scarcely be added that the pilot and his family were not lost sight of after the accession of the princess to the throne.

There were many memorable visits paid to places of interest to which the voyage could be made on board the *Emerald*, but, perhaps the most important event of the pleasant holiday was the opening of the new landing pier at Southampton, a ceremony which the Duchess of Kent and the princess graced by their presence. The royal yacht, having been towed from Cowes to Southampton Water by a steam-tug, was met by a deputation from the corporation of the town, who came in a state barge, on board which one of the town serjeants attended bearing a silver oar. The deputation presented an address, to which the duchess replied that she wished her daughter to become attached at an early age

to works of utility. The distinguished visitors entered the barge and were rowed ashore, where they were entertained at luncheon, and the pier having been declared open was, by permission, named the Royal pier.

It was while on their journey to Weymouth, the quiet and highly decorous watering-place where the Duke of Kent had stayed with George the Third, who made it his favourite seaside resort, that the duchess and her daughter stopped at Portsmouth to pay a visit to the young Queen Donna Maria da Gloria of Portugal, of whom mention has already been made. This youthful sovereign received much kindly and courteous attention from the English royal family, and in the *Greville Memoirs* we are told of a ball given by the King, who led the juvenile Queen of Portugal by the hand. She was magnificently attired, her dress and appearance offering a remarkable contrast to the simplicity of costume and the fresh, fair, sensible face of the Princess Victoria. The royal guest maintained most notable dignity of mien, though during the progress of the ball she accidentally fell and was somewhat hurt. We have already seen that Donna Maria became related by marriage to the Queen, and it may be mentioned here, before her disappearance from the narrative, that she was grand-niece to Amélie, Queen of Louis Philippe, King of the French. Amélie was the daughter of the King of Naples and Sicily, and married Louis Philippe (then Duke of Orleans) while he was at Palermo, where her father and his family were living under British protection. It was said that Louis Philippe had been intriguing to make a match between one of his sons and the young Queen Donna Maria when his intentions were frustrated by her marrying Prince Ferdinand of Coburg.

The next two years passed quietly enough, though some of the best society in England was occasionally entertained by the

Duchess of Kent at Kensington Palace. Sir Walter Scott, alas! would no more record a visit there, for the "Wizard of the North," who had enchanted a nation with his wondrous genius, had died at Abbotsford in 1832—died of a last vast effort to conquer the adversity of debt and difficulty which had overtaken him in his later years. We hear, however, of Lord Campbell dining at Kensington Palace in 1833, when the invited guests found the Princess Victoria in the drawing-room on their arrival and again on their return thither after dinner. This was not always the case, especially in the two succeeding years; but the mention of it shows with what care the childhood of the princess was preserved till she had reached an age when she could more properly participate in all the social pleasures that belong to a refined and intelligent circle. The duchess could not, of course, permit her young daughter to visit much at houses where "society" was always making itself conspicuous. The assemblies at Holland House and other places, which were attractive centres of famous people, would not have been suitable associations for the princess, even had she been two or three years older; but now that she was, by her knowledge, her studious disposition, and her marked intelligence, able to appreciate the company of those who were distinguished in science, art, or literature, or were known for their philanthropy and other marked qualities, there were frequent gatherings not only of those who held high rank or place in the state but of the aristocracy of culture. We hear of a visit of Southey, who appears to have called expressly to see the princess, and found not only that she was acquainted with his works, but that she could pay him a graceful and artless compliment by saying how she had read his life of Nelson half a dozen times over. We hear, too, of authors, artists, and a number of other people by

whom the English "May-flower," now in sweetest bloom, was looked upon with loving, reverent, but not unfamiliar eyes. It is not to be supposed that no visits were ever paid other than those of ceremony, or when the duchess and the Princess Victoria were the guests at great mansions and historical houses, where the noble hosts welcomed them during their autumn journeys; but the visiting in London was necessarily restricted, and though the poet Moore speaks of being invited to meet these distinguished guests at the house of a private friend, the circle so honoured was necessarily select. But the Princess Victoria now began to appear more in public, at musical performances and picture-galleries, and Leslie, the Academician, recording her visit to the Royal Academy, says that she had all the charms of youth, health, and high spirits, adding she could have seen little of the exhibition as she was herself, from the moment of entering the room, the sole object of attraction, as there were so many people among the nobility present whom she knew, and everyone of whom had something to say to her. It is also recorded, as incidental to the visit, that she shook hands and chatted with Mr. Rogers, the banker and poet, and also that Mr. Charles Kemble, the famous actor, was presented to her.

In July, 1834, the princess, then fifteen years old, was confirmed by the Archbishop of Canterbury (Dr. Howley) in the Chapel Royal, St. James's. The rite of confirmation, for which she had been prepared according to the instructions ordained by the English Church, is understood to mark the personal acceptance of those spiritual obligations which at the time of baptism are represented by the promises of the sponsors who devote the infant to the service of the Most High in the Christian faith and life; and there is reason to believe that the

infinitely serious meaning and the solemn responsibility of this obligation were deeply realized. The King and Queen were present with the Duchess of Kent, attended by some other members of the royal family; and when, after the confirmation, the archbishop tenderly but very earnestly addressed the princess, exhorting her to consider the great duties which her high position would require her to fulfil, and entreating her in every trial and difficulty to seek strength and guidance of Him who, being the King of Kings, can alone give to his children and subjects help in their utmost need, she was so deeply affected that every one present was moved to tears.

The current of the young life going peacefully on gives little to record during that year; but there are suggestions of kindly and benevolent deeds, indications that the perception of personal responsibility took a practical form. One anecdote, which seems, possibly because of some touching associations, to have been more distinctly repeated, records that at Tunbridge Wells, whither the Duchess of Kent and the princess went for the autumn, the husband of an actress who was engaged at the small theatre there had died, leaving the poor woman, who was soon to become a mother, in great want and distress. The princess on hearing of the sad case at once took ten pounds from her own allowance of pocket-money, and, after persuading the Duchess of Kent to contribute the same amount, carried the money to the poor widow, with whom she conversed for some time. It is not easy to imagine what was the gratitude of the sufferer, who seems, however, to have been a person both worthy of this timely and gracious help and capable of interesting her distinguished visitor, for we are told that further aid was given, and that on the accession of the princess to the throne an allowance of £40 a year was conferred on the woman for the remainder of her life.

It may be worth while to pause here for a moment to remember that among the numerous anecdotes and professed reminiscences relating to the Princess Victoria, as well before as after she became Queen, there are many which are not authentic, many that have no foundation in fact, and that at a comparatively recent date her Majesty has permitted a statement of a pretended incident in her early life to be contradicted. That none of those statements, which have about them even a remote air of probability, are in the least derogatory to the child who, as a princess, won the hearts of the people, who saw her so frequently, or to the Queen who has carried on that conquest in the stories of our lives from year to year, is in itself a marvellous testimony to her worth. It is obvious that authentic anecdotes such as those which we have been able to record as illustrations of the private or domestic life and the characteristic disposition of the Princess Victoria, could only be multiplied by a breach of confidence on the part of those who have been privileged to witness acts of personal beneficence or domestic incidents, which, however admirable, should be reserved from the public eye unless they are made known with the sanction of the august person who is directly interested.

The life of our sovereign Lady has been plain and clear to the respectful onlooking of her people. She herself has made it so, and has depicted its domestic no less than its regal conditions in words so simple and unaffected that even children can understand and appreciate them. The Queen has left little opportunity for the inventions or the pretended disclosures of prying gossip-mongers, either in or out of print, whose province it seems to be, at once to stimulate and profess to satisfy a mean curiosity which disregards the reticence that belongs to common courtesy. The visits of the Princess Victoria to the theatre or places of

public amusement had not been numerous even at the time of her accession to the throne, though her delight in music had been gratified by her comparatively frequent presence at concerts and at the opera-house. Till 1835 she had not appeared in public in state as a member of the royal family and heir to the throne, except when she accompanied the King and Queen to the musical festival at Westminster Abbey in the previous year. In June, 1835, however, in presence of a brilliant assembly, and of a multitude who lined the race-course at Ascot on the gold-cup day, the royal cortége arrived preceded by the Life Guards. The Princess Victoria, her fresh, fair young face beaming with pleasure at the spectacle presented by the enthusiastic crowd and the aspect of the grand-stand, was recognized, and shared with the King and Queen the continuous and hearty applause, though she appeared to be more delighted with the welcome accorded to the King than with any direct manifestations of loyalty to herself. A description of her appearance on the occasion tells us that her hair was braided in "Clotilde" bands under a large bonnet of pink or pale-rose colour, and that over a rose-coloured satin dress "*broché*" she wore a "pelerine" trimmed with black lace.

The mention of these particulars carries us back to a time which only the elderly reader can remember: the time of large widely-spreading bonnets, of short waists and rather short skirts just reaching the ankles, of sandal shoes, and pelerines. Yet, who can tell! The wave of fashion may set that way again ere long; indeed it is a matter of surprise that the jubilee year has not witnessed a "revival" in this direction.

It happened that in the summer of 1835 Nathaniel Parker Willis, an American author and journalist of some reputation, was in England, and having introductions to various fashionable

circles, made a good deal of literary capital out of his observations by describing, without much delicacy of reticence, people he had met, and repeating their remarks and conversations. He was at Ascot on the occasion of the royal visit, and subsequently included this among his rather random and personal pencillings: "In one of the intervals I walked under the King's stand and saw her Majesty the Queen and the young Princess Victoria very distinctly. They were leaning over the railing listening to a ballad singer, and seeming as much interested and amused as any simple country folk could be. The Queen is undoubtedly the plainest woman in her dominions, but the princess is much better looking than any picture of her in the shops, and for the heir to such a crown as that of England unnecessarily pretty and interesting. She will be sold, poor thing! bartered away by those great dealers in royal hearts, whose grand calculations will not be much consolation to her if she happens to have a taste of her own."

The *rawness* of these remarks seems peculiar to-day when we remember that in America Mr. Willis was regarded as a highly cultured writer, and had gained much distinction as a poet, or, at all events, as a writer of verses of sentiment; but the assumption of the critic and the moralist is immensely amusing. It is not on record that Mr. Willis was ever presented to the Princess Victoria, who, soon after the Ascot meeting, accompanied her mother on a journey northward as far as York, where they visited the Archbishop at Bishopsthorpe, and were greatly interested in the noble minster when they attended the York musical festival, at which the oratorio the *Messiah* was performed. It may not be inappropriate to quote the following lines which appeared in *Blackwood's Magazine*, addressed "To the Princess Victoria on seeing her in York Cathedral during the performance of the *Messiah*."—

"Sweet princess! as I gaze upon thee *now*,
In the bright sunshine of thy youthful grace,
And in thy soft, blue eyes, and tranquil brow,
Would seek resemblance to thy lofty race,
I think how soon the whelming cares of state
May crush thy free, young spirit with their weight,
And change the guileless beauty of thy face;
Nor leave of that sweet, happy smile one trace:
Then earnestly I pray that thou mayst be
Through all thy life beloved, good and great;
And when from thy calm home, by Heaven's decree,
Thou art called to rule a mighty nation's fate,
Mayst thou throughout thy reign be just and wise,
And win at last a crown immortal in the skies."

On the homeward journey visits were made to the Earl of Harewood at Harewood House; to Wentworth, near Rotherham, where the duchess and the Princess Victoria were the guests of Earl Fitzwilliam; and to the Duke of Rutland at Belvoir, whence they went to stay with the Marquis of Exeter at Burghley House. "They arrived from Belvoir at three o'clock in a heavy rain," says Greville, the chronicler whose rather acrid and cynical humour has made his memoirs famous, and gives them something of the flavour of court scandal, which he occasionally reproduces—"they arrived from Belvoir at three o'clock in a heavy rain, the civic authorities having turned out at Stamford to escort them, and a procession of different people, all very loyal. When they had lunched, and the mayor and his brethren had got dry, the duchess received the address, which was read by Lord Exeter as recorder. It talked of the princess as 'destined to mount the throne of these realms.' Conroy handed the answer just as the prime-minister does to the King. They are splendidly lodged, and great preparations have been made for their reception. The dinner at Burghley was very handsome; hall well lit; and

all went off well, except that a pail of ice was landed in the duchess's lap, which made a great bustle. Three hundred people at the ball, which was opened by Lord Exeter and the princess, who, after dancing one dance, went to bed. They appeared at breakfast next morning at nine o'clock, and at ten set off for Holkham." Greville of course was present: and on reading this and other descriptive touches in his memoirs one is led to wonder whether he and the American tourist Mr. Willis ever met, and if they did, what they thought of each other.

Among the visits made by the princess, probably one of the most interesting was that to the Duke of Wellington at Walmer Castle, near Deal, where, as warden of the Cinque Ports, his grace mostly resided for a part of each year. The fine bracing sea air and the outlook over the great roadstead of the "Downs," with its ever-changing fleet, suited him well, and though at sixty-seven years old he maintained the plain habits of living which, even as the commander in long campaigns, he had acquired, he could doubtless observe as splendid hospitality at the castle as he displayed at Apsley House. Personally—that is, for himself—the great captain had some disdain for luxuries and even for superfluities. Few people have been more simple in their requirements; and it was declared on good authority that, even at his great house in town, he slept upon a narrow camp bedstead in a room bare of all but actually indispensable furniture.

He was, however, punctilious, if not somewhat ceremonious, in observing those distinctions which society expected in a noble host, and what may be called his rule of manners was well expressed when, on one occasion, he resented what appeared to be disrespectful familiarity on the part of a great personage, and defended his anger by saying, "No man has any right to take a liberty with me, for I never take a liberty with any man."

In fact he was too really great a gentleman to think about condescension. His manners, though rather formal, were cheerful, and on ordinary occasions were as simple as his tastes; and it was well known that the children of houses where he visited were delighted to have the duke for a playmate, for he was neither formal nor austere with them, but jovially abetted them in their noisiest romps and even in some of their mischievous pranks.

Doubtless the visit of the Duchess of Kent and the Princess Victoria was one of some ceremony; but it is certain that "the duke" must already have been regarded as a faithful friend, and it is quite certain that he had a loyal and, so to speak, a paternal affection for the young princess to whom he would one day devote his allegiance. Already he must have felt that his duty was to protect her; for he had for some time past had his eagle eye upon the Duke of Cumberland, whom he neither liked nor respected, and whose clumsy machinations against the Duchess of Kent and the Princess Victoria were soon to be brought to public notice.

The stay at Walmer Castle was brief, but it was likely to be agreeably associated with a cherished and most pleasant event, for, during a sojourn at Ramsgate, the Duchess of Kent and the princess received a visit from the brother and uncle who had been guardian and counsellor. Prince Leopold was then firmly established on the throne of Belgium. He had in his opening address to the Belgian parliament declared that he would encourage industry, and rule according to the principles of civil and religious liberty; and this promise he had so well redeemed that his reign was secure while other sovereigns were watching, not without dismay, the changes wrought by revolution. Leopold had now a queen to share his throne. He would never lose the memory—a sad and abiding, though no

longer a poignant memory—of the wife who had died so soon, in the first blossom of wedded happiness. With that sorrow fresh in his heart he had been unable to look upon the face of the infant Victoria, who, in respect to the succession to the throne, was to take the place of his Princess Charlotte; but it was from no ignoble feeling of jealousy or base repining—only that the sight of the little babe in his sister's arms roused too keenly the recollection of that hour of anguish when his own wife and her babe lay dead at Claremont. In the hour of his sister's affliction, however, he was at hand, and not only looked upon, but loved her child, all the more, perhaps, that he saw in her some resemblance to her whom he had lost. Whether this was so or not, he bestowed a genuine affection on the little Victoria, and made her and her future well-being his especial care. Nor was that care to cease now that he had found a worthy queen and companion, the Princess Louise-Marie-Thérèse, eldest daughter of Louis Philippe, King of the French, and his Queen, the amiable Amélie. This princess, like all the daughters of Amélie, was a charming and most estimable woman. Everybody loved, everybody spoke well of her. Even Stockmar, who, in his admiration for his royal master, might have been expected to utter only undertones of praise, speaks of her as though she were a saint, and yet his words found true echo in the hearts of those who best knew Louise, Queen of the Belgians. In a few memorial words, written years after he had formed the highest opinion of her character and also of her clear insight and sound judgment, he said: "From the moment that the queen entered that circle in which I for so many years have had a place, I have revered her as a pattern of her sex. We say and believe that men can be noble and good: of her we know with certainty that she was so. We saw in her daily a truthfulness, a faithful fulfilment of duty, which

makes us believe in the possible, though but seldom evident, nobleness of the human heart. In characters such as the queen's I see a guarantee of the perfection of the Being who has created human nature."

The Queen Louise accompanied her husband on that visit to Ramsgate, where she met the young princess, to whom she became a beloved and intimate friend, thenceforth to be held in closest regard.

The year 1836 was an important and an eventful one for the Princess Victoria, who then had attained the seventeenth year of her age. Until September the Duchess of Kent had remained at Kensington, where much company had been entertained and special visitors had been received. There had also been assemblies, state dinners, and state concerts, and the months from the birthday of the princess in May to late in August had been rather full of excitement and marked by peculiar interest.

The incidents were not all agreeable, however, and even some of the more important occurrences were calculated to be hostile to the peace of the princess. The King appears to have been under some jarring influence which increased the asperity of temper that he had on more than one occasion displayed towards the Duchess of Kent, whose determination to maintain the entire direction of her daughter's training and education seems to have aroused his resentment. The King, who was certainly liable to get into a passion, and when in it to use expressions which were neither dignified nor polite, had apparently been jealous of the independent position taken by the Duchess of Kent, and had not hesitated to say in as many words that he expected and desired to see the princess more frequently at Buckingham Palace or at Windsor. That he

would have liked to have been more frequently consulted, and to have had a great deal more control over the appointment of her surroundings and the bestowal of her engagements, was obvious enough; and during the early part of this year the part taken by Prince Leopold as well as by the Duchess of Kent in directing her probable destinies had, perhaps, been more conspicuous. At anyrate, though his Majesty showed much kindness to his niece, and spoke both to her and of her in a manner that was affectionate, he was evidently much disturbed in temper: at first in somewhat of a sulky humour, that afterwards worked up to one of those rages in which he was sometimes known to "speak his mind," or what he thought was his mind, in a very disturbed and unceremonious manner.

Most of the court and other festivities were drawing to a close when, on the King's birthday, the 21st of August, the Duchess of Kent and the princess were at Windsor Castle on a visit, and there was a private dinner, at which, however, about a hundred persons were present. The Duchess of Kent sat on one side the King and the Princess Augusta on the other, and his majesty, having proposed, and joined in drinking, the health of his sister, said, "And now, having given the health of the oldest, I will give that of the youngest member of the royal family. I know the interest which the public feel about her, and although I have not seen so much of her as I could have wished I take no less interest in her, and the more I do see of her, both in public and in private, the greater pleasure it will give me." This is what the King was afterwards reported to have said; but we have been told in memoirs more recently published that he said more; that in answering to the drinking of his own health he referred in direct and angry terms to the seclusion of the princess from court,

and to what he considered, to be disrespect or insult on the part of the Duchess of Kent. Of the duchess he spoke with so much asperity and evidently uncontrolled temper that the Queen was much distressed, the princess in tears, and the whole company somewhat horrified; while the lady herself, too indignant or too prudent to make any reply to such an attack, rose to leave the table and asked for her carriage; but, on some kind of explanation or concession being made, was induced to remain till next day. It is not out of place to refer to this, even if it be only a piece of court scandal, for it indicates what was certainly the condition of temper exhibited by the King, and it is possible also that there may have been the same sinister influence at work as that which in that very year was exposed in Parliament —the influence of the Duke of Cumberland, who, though he was not likely to succeed in setting the King against the Princess Victoria, might without much difficulty arouse his existing jealousy of the duchess of Kent and excite his suspicions with regard to the regency which she was to exercise in case of the death of the King before the princess came of age.

The report of this unseemly speech of the King and of his marked attack on the duchess was, however, only taken from hearsay: said to be from a repetition of what took place by Adolphus Fitzclarence. This piece of scandal, however, appears to have been made known at second hand by the Princess Lieven, the wife of the Russian ambassador, a dangerous, and apparently a malicious intriguante, who, it is known, was plotting with Cumberland in political matters at an earlier date, and of whom it is perhaps only necessary to give Stockmar's word-portrait to indicate her character. "A disagreeable, stiff, proud, and haughty manner. It is true she is full of talent, plays the pianoforte admirably, speaks English, French, and German

perfectly; but then, she is well aware of it. Her face is certainly handsome, though too thin, and the pointed nose as well as the mouth, which can be contracted into various folds, show, even outwardly, the small inclination she has to consider others as her equals. Her neck is like a skeleton's."

This personage seems to have had something of the same kind of spite against the Duchess of Kent which was shown by the Duke of Cumberland. After the coronation we learn from Greville's memoirs that she told him (Greville) of an interview she had had with the duchess, in which the animus with which she repeats and interprets very natural and simple remarks suggests at once that she had been biassed by dislike or by some previous interest which was inimical to the duchess and to the Queen herself.

It is not difficult to fancy what this influence was by the light of other events which occurred in 1836. The Duke of Cumberland was violent and overbearing, and of course, as an extreme Tory, had been opposed to Catholic emancipation and other concessions. This would not have mattered so much had he not been, in spite of his arrogant assumptions of high-mindedness and religious principle, a coarse and sometimes almost brutal man, with ungovernable pride, not many scruples where his own advantages were concerned, and with an almost fatal knack of acting in such a way as to alienate those who might have inclined to be friendly to him. He seemed to care very little who was unfriendly, and was ready to trample or to gallop over anybody who stood in his way, and to treat anybody with almost ogreish insult. It would not be accurate to say that everybody detested him, for he continued to be on good terms with a few people, and kept up a correspondence with them, and especially with one of them (Lord Strangford) for some years after he had left

England; but he was heartily disliked by nearly everybody with whom he came in contact, and the people of England, for the most part, held him in positive abhorrence.

It is pretty certain that any personage in such a high position, if he be disliked, will have accusations brought against him for which there may be little or no foundation, and it is not necessary to recount other charges that were made against the Duke of Cumberland. It is only that of conspiring to set aside the succession to the crown that need be even briefly referred to in these pages. That the duke was a Tory of an extreme type, was of less consequence because of the general break-up and disappearance of that section of political parties; indeed, what had been known as the Tory party was seemingly destroyed; and the tactics of Sir Robert Peel had organized against the Whig or Liberal government a steady though small opposition, who assumed the name of "Conservatives." The weakening of the Whig government by the secession of some of the cabinet on the Irish Church question, causing the resignation of Earl Grey in July, 1834, had been followed by the formation of a feeble ministry by Lord Melbourne, and its dismissal by the King in the following November, when Sir Robert Peel was sent for from Rome and undertook the government on "Liberal-Conservative" principles, a declaration which led to his being distrusted by both parties, and to his defeat and resignation in April, 1835, when Lord Melbourne returned to office.

The Duke of Cumberland had been so violent at the time of the passing of the Catholic Emancipation Bill that the King (George the Fourth) had been positively afraid of him, and the Duke of Wellington had to show that *he* was not the man to be frightened by anybody. The headstrong, abusive brother of the King was so generally suspected and disliked that, though

he was grand-master or president of the Orange lodges, and the Brunswick lodges which represented Protestant ascendency, Peel wrote to the Duke of Wellington, "The Duke of Cumberland has no sort of influence over public opinion in this country, or over any party that is worth consideration. I do not believe that the most violent Brunswickers have the slightest respect for him or slightest confidence in him." The plan that the Duke of Cumberland then took was to haunt the sick and dying King (George the Fourth), and to use every opportunity to malign the Duke of Wellington and the ministry. Greville calls his conduct "atrocious—a mixture of narrow-mindedness, selfishness, truckling, blustering, and duplicity, with no object but self—his own ease and the gratification of his own fancies and prejudices." The King would have given a good deal to get rid of him, but he would not go abroad as he was entreated to do. William the Fourth, however, was not so easily frightened, and, when his brother began to trouble and worry him, showed that he would neither be bullied nor cajoled. "The land we live in, and let those who don't like it leave it," was the significant toast given by the bluff sailor King at one of his dinners when the Duke of Cumberland was present.

It was the public distrust of this fierce, unscrupulous "grand-master" which produced the feeling that the Princess Victoria would not be safe in case of the King's death without the appointment of a regency, and in 1835 there had been some disclosures which sufficiently justified the suspicions that had been entertained. Several of the Liberal members, including Mr. Sheil, a famous parliamentary orator, and Mr. Hume, had unearthed a portentous secret, and pressed for an answer to the question whether it was true that 182 addresses from Orange societies had been presented to the King, and whether answers

had not been returned to the parties, stating that the addresses had been most graciously received. The question was evidently intended to lead up to something else. Sir Robert Peel and ministers were taken by surprise, and could only say in defence of returning such answers to Protestant societies alleged to be illegal, that the illegality of Orange lodges had never been judicially declared, and that the addresses had been received and answered only according to usual form. Mr. Sheil moved for the production of copies of the addresses and of a letter by Lord Manners when he was Chancellor of Ireland relative to the illegality of Orange societies, and also for the opinions of the Irish law officers. This was resisted and finally withdrawn; but Mr. Hume obtained a committee to investigate the matter of the Orange lodges and their designs, and the evidence taken was startling enough, and was regarded as proof of the existence of a powerful conspiracy of Orange clubs, having for its object to set aside the Princess Victoria as next in succession.

The chiefs of the Orange movement pretended or professed to suspect the Duke of Wellington of an intention to seize the crown, a notion for which they were perhaps indebted to Napoleon Bonaparte, and they proposed to declare William IV. to be insane, to set aside the princess as a woman and a minor, and to place the Duke of Cumberland on the throne. There could at all events be no doubt that there was in existence an extensive Orange confederation, and that the duke as grand-master, and the Bishop of Salisbury as grand-chaplain, with several Tory peers among the Orange leaders, must have been aware of it. In England there were 145,000 members, in Ireland 175,000, and there were branches in nearly every regiment of the army at home and abroad. Naturally enough the "dreary duke" and Lord Kenyon, who was implicated

along with him, denied having any guilty knowledge of the proceedings, and declared that they did not know of the existence of Orange clubs in the army. This was so improbable that the committee could do no other than report that they could not reconcile the statement with the evidence. Lord John Russell induced the House to suspend judgment, and this was to give the duke time to withdraw from the association and make the best of his shameful situation; but as he took no such steps, and bullied and protested as usual, he was censured by vote. Then it came about that in 1836 the Radicals with a fine irony determined to indict the Duke of Cumberland, the Bishop of Salisbury, and Lord Kenyon under an act which had become almost obsolete (the act making the extra-judicial administration of oaths a criminal offence). The irony was this, that not long before, numbers of operatives who were members of trades-unions had been holding meetings, and their example seemed likely to be followed by some agricultural labourers, who thought they might unite to secure some improvement of their condition. This filled land-owners and farmers with alarm, and the question was asked what could be done to stop such dangerous demonstrations. The question was answered when six Dorchester peasants were caught administering unionist oaths to some of their poor companions, and, under the Extra-judicial Administration of Oaths Act, were indicted, found guilty, and sentenced to seven years transportation. Of course they were ignorant of the law, and though they were not excused on that account they knew quite well that they were being punished, not for the oaths, but for meeting to agitate the questions that most affected them. There were tremendous demonstrations of the actual trades-unions; a deputation of 30,000 waited on Lord Melbourne, who sent word to them that they could not be attended to unless

they sent in a memorial in a proper manner: consequently the memorial was sent, and after a time the Dorchester labourers received a free pardon.

Under the same act against administering illegal oaths the indictments against the Duke of Cumberland and his confederates were drawn; and the prosecution was about to commence, but the death of an important witness delayed it; and when the House of Commons again met, Mr. Hume proposed an address to the crown. The duke was then obliged to do what he had the opportunity of doing at first, and, apparently without any shame or a feeling of humiliation, he proceeded to break up the confederation.

There was one very obvious cause of King William's ill-temper, which had been smouldering ever since he had heard that the principal birthday guests at Kensington Palace would be the Duke of Coburg and his two sons, the Princes Ernest and Albert. Even if the secret had been kept from the princess, he probably knew that it had always been the desire of King Leopold, and perhaps of the Duchess of Kent, that the younger of the two princes should win his way to the affection of the little "May-flower," of whom the court and family circle at Coburg were ever speaking lovingly, and of whom even the nurse of the prince used to talk to him as though some twin destiny had been appointed for him and his little cousin in England.

The King, however, was altogether opposed to the young Prince of Coburg becoming a suitor to the Princess Victoria, and he went so far as to endeavour to prevent the duke's visit with his two sons to England. William the Fourth doubtless considered that, as his niece could not be supposed to have any preference, even if at her early age the subject

had been presented to her, he ought to claim precedence in providing a suitable bridegroom, and he was greatly in favour of Prince Alexander of the Netherlands, brother of the King of Holland. He had never mentioned this to the Princess Victoria, nor does it appear that at that time she had heard any distinct references to the claims or qualifications of other apparently eligible suitors; but not unnaturally the King may have thought that his candidate should have the earliest opportunity.

It says something for the King's good-nature, however, that he invited the visitors to be present at all the court festivities. More than this, the Queen has made known that in later years Queen Adelaide said to her, that if she had told the King it was her own earnest wish to marry her cousin, and that her happiness depended on it, he would at once have given up his opposition to it, as he was very fond of, and always very kind to his niece. We have it on the Queen's authority that she certainly would never have married anyone else, though several other candidates for her hand were seriously thought of. Among these, it might be supposed, were her cousins in England, Prince George of Cambridge and Prince George of Cumberland; but the attitude assumed by the Duke of Cumberland towards his niece must at all events have prevented any such expectations on the part of his son, even if the unfortunate youth had not passed, by an accident, from partial to almost total blindness. Duke Ernest of Wurtemberg, in whose favour some interest was being made, was the brother of Prince Albert's step-mother; and among later requests for permission to seek the hand of the Princess Victoria was that on behalf of Prince Adalbert, the son of Prince William of Prussia.

It was evident to those who had carefully and anxiously watched the habits and education of Prince Albert, that he



ALBERT,
PRINCE CONSORT.
(at the age of 22.)

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showed promise of soon becoming eminently suitable for the position, at once delicate and arduous, of consort to the future queen of this country. In personal appearance he was singularly and even strikingly handsome, and, though not so tall and apparently not so strong as his brother, who was a year older, bore an expression of higher refinement. This expression, together with remarkable faculties of observation and reflection, increased during the completion of his education, which after that time was principally conducted under the advice of Baron Stockmar. In accordance with his opinion the princes, who from infancy had been inseparable, went to Brussels to pursue their studies partly under the eye of their uncle Leopold, who would himself be able to instruct them on political and international questions and the principles of constitutional government. From Brussels they went to the university at Bonn, where they remained from April, 1837, to the end of 1838, during which period Stockmar, at the earnest request of King Leopold, came to reside in England as the trusted helper and adviser of the Princess Victoria.

The young Prince Albert must have been endowed with a rare mental and moral temperament to have escaped, without being spoiled, from the open admiration and "petting" which attended his childhood; but it was not only the remarkable personal beauty of the fair-haired, blue-eyed infant, nor even his childlike gentleness combined with unusual vivacity, that made him a favourite. The same equable good sense which seemed to preserve him from the deteriorating influence of admiration, was itself a chief reason for the undeviating affection and esteem entertained for him by his early friends, companions, and play-fellows, no less than by those who were his later associates. Fellow-students and companions on educational

tours or at college—men distinguished in statesmanship, science, or art, professors, tutors—all were attracted and interested by the same characteristics, which deepened as infancy passed to boyhood and youth to manhood.

"Every grace had been showered by nature on this charming boy," wrote Herr Florschütz, the "Rath" or tutor chosen to instruct the children while they were yet infants (Albert being not five years old), and who remained with them till they went to college. "Every eye rested on him with delight, and his look won the hearts of all." Herr Florschütz was a man eminently suited for his position. He loved the boys, and they learned to love him, and this affection grew with their learning and the knowledge that he imparted; but he was not too indulgent, and as they had plenty of play and lived much in the open air, the good Rath, both then and later, lamented—almost resented—the time spent in breakfasting with their father in one or other of the gardens belonging to the palaces, a practice which, he considered, wasted the whole of the forenoons during the spring and summer months in the year. Still they made good progress with their studies, and as both were very precocious children, and Albert especially so, it may have been as well that the tutorial instincts were not to have all their own way.

The little Albert, *so* little that he was glad for Herr Florschütz to carry him up stairs, was not "let off" much during school time.

"I cried at my lesson to-day because I could not find a verb, and the Rath pinched me to show me what a verb was. And I cried about it," wrote the little prince in a journal which he kept in 1825 before he was six years old, and while the Duke of Coburg was much away from Rosenau, where the children remained. "I wrote a letter at home. But because

I had made so many mistakes in it the Rath tore it up and threw it into the fire. I cried about it." This was on the 26th of March, a month after the former entry; but the next day the entry was, "I finished writing my letter, then I played;" and on the 4th of April came the pleasant announcement that the duke had returned. "After dinner we went with dear papa to Ketschendorf. There I drank beer, and ate bread and butter and cheese." It may be remarked that the consumption of beer or of wine did not become a habit, for Prince Albert could, or at all events seldom did, drink little else than water at dinner, and was more than indifferent to what are called the "pleasures of the table."

This journal, kept with much regularity, was singularly truthful. It recounted events and recorded faults without palliation. "I got up well and happy; afterwards I had a fight with my brother. . . . After dinner we went to the play. It was 'Wallenstein's Lager,' and they carried out a monk" This is on April 9th. On the 10th: "I had another fight with my brother: that was not right." A previous entry records . . . "I was to recite something, but I did not wish to do so: that was not right: naughty!"

There is, of course, nothing extraordinary in these childish records, though even to keep a journal at all at so early an age is unusual; but there are indications of character even here, and as the entries go on—for it was continued for some years—the development of the education and disposition of the prince is apparent, and especially the maintenance of that strict truthfulness which is equally observed in his letters to his father, his grandmothers, and his young friends.

There can be no doubt that the childhood of the princes was a happy one, and though Albert in infancy was in some respects not robust and suffered from attacks of croup, their habits were

simple, active, and healthy. There was much exercise, much change in visiting various friends and taking part in sports and entertainments, and, along with eager and well-ordered study, a good deal of recreation and numerous playfellows to join in games of the sturdy Saxon fashion.

The duke appears to have had a very genuine affection for his sons; but they had, even at the earlier age of which we have been speaking, lost the care of their mother, the Princess Louise, daughter by his first wife (a princess of Mecklenburg-Schwerin) of Augustus, last reigning duke but one of Saxe-Gotha-Altenburg. She was a beautiful little woman, fair with blue eyes, and was full of cleverness and talent, but, according to Herr Florschütz, she showed too much partiality in the treatment of her children. "She made no attempt to conceal that Prince Albert was her favourite child. He was handsome and bore a strong resemblance to herself. He was, in fact, her pride and glory. The influence of this partiality upon the minds of the children might have been most injurious; and to this was added the unfortunate differences which soon followed, and by which the peace of the family was disturbed, differences that, gradually increasing, led to a separation between the duke and duchess in 1824, and a divorce in 1826."

The children must, of course, have been affected by this, for when the duchess finally left Coburg they never saw her again. The marriage had not been a happy one. Incompatibility of temper, and views that were irreconcilable, appear to have ended in the necessity for this separation, which, though it must for some time have been the occasion of wonder and grief to the two children, did not permanently interfere with their happiness, nor did they lose a loving and respectful memory of the mother whom they did not see.

The Queen has recorded that the prince (Albert) "never forgot her, and spoke with much tenderness and sorrow of his poor mother. . . . One of the first gifts he made to the Queen was a little pin he had received from her when a little child. Princess Louise (the prince's fourth daughter, and named after her grandmother) is said to be like her in face."

The father of the duchess had been long married a second time, and her stepmother, the Duchess Dowager of Gotha, appears to have been a sincere friend to her, to the time of her death, after a long and painful illness, at St. Wendel in Switzerland in 1831, when she was in her thirty-second year.

It was then that the amiable Duchess, her stepmother,[1] wrote to the Duke of Coburg:—"My dear Duke,—This also I have to endure, that the child whom I watched over with such love should go before me. May God now allow me to be reunited to all my loved ones! . . . It is a most bitter feeling that the dear, dear House of Gotha is now extinct."[2]

The little princes at the Rosenau were still the objects of a constant care and solicitude which was next to maternal. There was a loving competition between the old Dowager Duchess of Coburg, their paternal grandmother, and the other maternal step-grandmother at Gotha, who had them always near her heart, and, as often as she could, would have them to stay with her as visitors, taking care to make that visit a holiday, from which they returned improved in health and spirits.

The education of the princes was of the broad general character best suited to their position. It included history, geography, mathematics, philosophy, religion, Latin, and the

[1] She was the Princess Caroline of Hesse Cassel (born in 1768), daughter of William, Elector of Hesse, and Wilhelmina of Denmark.

[2] See p. 64.

modern European languages, relieved by the study of music and drawing, for both of which the prince early showed a marked inclination. He was also from childhood fond of natural history.

In the autumn of 1833 the duke remarried, the new duchess being the Princess Mary of Wurtemberg, the daughter of his sister Princess Antoinette and Duke Alexander of Wurtemberg. She was a year older than the first wife of the duke would have been had she lived, and the two lads, who accompanied their father to the Castle of Thalwitz in Saxony, there to await the arrival of the princess from Petersburg and to escort her to Coburg, appear to have afterwards treated her with genuine loyalty, and the letters written to her by Prince Albert during his travels are expressive of confidence and affection.

Up to the year 1835, with the exception of a short visit to their uncle, King Leopold, at Brussels, in 1832, the princes had not left home. In that year, after their confirmation in the Protestant faith in the chapel of the palace at Coburg, they went to Mecklenburg to congratulate the Grand-duke of Mecklenburg-Schwerin, their great-grandfather by the mother's side, on the fiftieth anniversary of his accession, and, after a few days spent there, they travelled on to Berlin. At both places they were well received, and produced a most favourable impression. "It requires, however," writes the prince from Berlin (9th May, 1835), to his stepmother, the Duchess of Coburg, "a giant's strength to bear all the fatigue we have had to undergo. Visits, parades, rides, déjeuners, dinners, suppers, balls, and concerts follow each other in rapid succession, and we have not been allowed to miss any one of the festivities." From Berlin the princes went to Dresden, Prague, Vienna, Pesth, and Ofen, returning towards the end of May to Coburg to resume their studies, with which

Prince Albert, at all events, was well pleased. Their simple habits of early rising, plain living, open-air exercise, daily lessons, and regular amusements made him indifferent to fashionable assemblies and conventional "gaieties," which bored and fatigued him, and he had an invincible tendency to fall asleep when the hour grew late. This feeling of drowsiness was constitutional; his tutor had known him when quite a child to slumber so profoundly as to fall off his chair, and, unhurt, to remain still asleep upon the floor; and he was frequently compelled after a long day, if engaged at a late hour in any festive gathering, to steal away to some recess or bay of a window, and there have, at least, a few minutes' repose. The tendency never left him, but he never suffered it to interfere with the duties of courtesy, and, however fatigued, would stand or move about for a whole evening watchful for the comfort and enjoyment of others.

For some time before the seventeenth birthday of the Princess Victoria, in May, 1836, rumours of proposed matrimonial alliances for her may have reached the ears of the King of the Belgians. In the following year she would attain her majority, and her accession to the throne could not be far distant, he therefore seriously considered how a meeting of the prince and princess might best be proposed, with a view to awakening a spontaneous but undeclared interest, the first half-conscious and yet unembarrassed advances of mutual admiration and regard. If these lines were part of a novel, and that part of it over which we might linger with a touch of fancy, subtle and delicate, something might be said of tender thoughts, unexpressed questions, gentle resolves, wistful hopes or fears that had vibrated at intervals in two young hearts—the heart of the princely youth in the old palace of the Rosenau, amidst the beautiful peaceful scenery

of the Thüringerwald;—the heart of the maiden, in the rather dowdy old palace at Kensington or the more delightful seclusion of Claremont. Messages and tokens of cousinly good-will had passed during these years of childhood. Something of the semblance of each was probably known to the other so far as portraits went, though the sun had not then risen upon photographs. One might almost take a simile from photography itself, and say that in these young souls the sensitive plates were all this time being prepared, and that they needed for their development only the illumination of the eyes that would look love to eyes that looked again.

Thus far we may speculate without being indebted to imagination. No novel that was ever written, no poem that was ever sung or said, has more in it of a true love story than arose from the first meeting of this prince and princess, of whose wooing it probably was declared, that it was "cut and dried—arranged beforehand, as all royal wooings or betrothals are."

It had been "cut and dried"—arranged beforehand—no doubt in the minds, the hopes, the ardent wishes of those who held these children dearest, but who, because they held them so dear, were for hearing the voice of their hearts before even the fondest of these wishes should be formed into fetters however golden. If the youth and maiden had, as children, been accustomed to some half dawning of the relation which they might one day sustain to each other, they were not to be reminded of it at the time of the first approach.

Stockmar, who had been taken into the counsels of the King of the Belgians, and at once began critically to diagnose the character of the prince and to suggest plans for his education, that he might be worthy to fulfil the trust that should be reposed

in him, advised the acceptance of the invitation to the birthday of the Princess Victoria. On the 16th of April (1836) he wrote, "Now is the right moment for the first appearance in England. If the first favourable impression is now made the foundation-stone is laid for the future edifice. But it must be a *conditio sine quâ non*, that the real intention of the visit should be kept secret from the princess as well as the prince, that they may be perfectly at their ease with each other."

There seems to be little—though in significance there must have been much—to record of that four weeks' visit to Kensington Palace. We are not informed how inquiring eyes met the light each in each, or whether the flicker of a tell-tale blush went out for a moment as signal amidst the greetings. These are matters into which none need pry Enough for us to remember, that both youth and maiden were of self-possessed, because not weakly self-conscious temperament,—that there was a noble simplicity in both, and a modesty that consists with the true dignity that can bide its time. They were kindred in pursuits, tastes, and acquirements, and it has been distinctly declared that there was a marvellous likeness observed between them as the prince came into the hall. There is no need to repeat the list of entertainments and assemblies which the princes and their father attended. Only one descriptive note need be added, and it occurs in the words of the Queen herself. "The prince was at that time much shorter than his brother, already very handsome, but very stout, which he entirely grew out of afterwards. He was most amiable, natural, unaffected, and merry; full of interest in everything, playing on the piano with the princess, his cousin, drawing; in short, constantly occupied. He always paid the greatest attention to all he saw, and the Queen remembers well how intently he listened to the sermon preached

in Saint Paul's, when he and his father and brother accompanied the Duchess of Kent and the princess there on the occasion of the service attended by the children of the different charity schools. It is, indeed, rare to see a prince not yet seventeen years of age bestowing such earnest attention on a sermon."

The Princess Victoria had been left to form her own estimate of the young prince, and though it is scarcely probable that she was unaware of the wishes of the family that there should be a mutual regard between her and her cousin, the young people were left to form an unbiassed opinion of each other. That the mutual impression was favourable was to be seen in the letters which the princess sent to her uncle after the departure of the visitors. The language of love needs no words, and even the first advances thitherward are known to those most interested by tokens too subtle and delicate for direct speech. There had been nothing said, nothing hinted between them, unless it may have been by such signs as the giving of a flower, the glance of an eye, the momentary pressure of a hand; but yet from the time of this visit there was not only an understanding on the part of all concerned, but a very general belief among the public that this young couple would be married. King Leopold now spoke more distinctly to his niece of his hope that the wishes which had been entertained were likely to be promoted by her knowledge of the prince, whose society had been so agreeable to her, and the replies of the princess were sufficiently decided to show that she had become deeply interested and that her affection had been engaged. The letter in which she responded to these inquiries concluded by saying: "I have only now to beg you, my dearest uncle, to take care of the health of one now so dear to me, and to take him under your special protection. I hope and trust that all will go on pros-

perously and well on this subject, now of so much importance to me."

This was written on the 7th of June, 1836, and though the modest avowal of the princess gave much satisfaction to her uncle Leopold, it appears not to have been thought advisable at once to acquaint the prince with the favourable light in which he was regarded. That is to say, there was no formal engagement; but the advice of Stockmar was adopted, and the education of the prince was directed into such channels as would best fit him for the position to which he might be called. He and his brother went at once to Brussels, calling at Paris on the way, to make the acquaintance of the Orleans family, one of the most cultivated, amiable, and agreeable in Europe. At Brussels the youths entered at once upon a serious course of study of history, modern languages, and the higher mathematics, Prince Albert being an ardent pupil of M. Quetelet, the famous statist. From Brussels, in April, 1837, they went to Bonn, where they studied under the most eminent professors of that university, and Prince Albert distinguished himself by his attainments in the natural sciences, political economy, and philosophy, at the same time that he won the affectionate regard and esteem of his companions, one of the most intimate of whom was Prince William of Löwenstein. Meantime the princes, and particularly Prince Albert, maintained a simple, affectionate, and cousinly correspondence with the Duchess of Kent and the Princess Victoria at Kensington. The young people were biding their time, each perhaps with the consciousness of a secret which possibly each thought might be not quite known to the other.

In 1837 the princess would be eighteen years of age and would therefore attain her majority. Preparations were made suitably to celebrate the event. As the birthday approached,

however, the condition of the King was such as to preclude him from taking any active or prominent part in the forthcoming festivities. His Majesty, who was seventy-one years of age, had mostly been liable to attacks of hay-fever in the spring of the year, and at this time he was suffering severely not only from that disorder, but from other infirmities and from the weakness which followed the attacks. He strove manfully to fulfil his duties, and on the 21st of May held a levee and drawing-room, but was obliged to remain seated while receiving the company. On the 24th, the birthday of the princess, he could not quit his apartments, and the Queen could not leave him; but he sent affectionate messages to his niece, along with a very elegant present of a superb grand-piano, and made arrangements for a grand ball to be held in her honour at Saint James's Palace. It is said that he had some time previously offered to allow her a considerable additional income if she would, on coming of age, commence with a household of his appointment, but that the offer was declined. Even if this had been the case, it seems to have made little difference in the kindness with which his Majesty had prepared to celebrate the birthday; and when he and the Queen found that they could not be present, they would not allow their absence to interfere with any of the rejoicings or to mar the festivities, the day being observed as a general holiday in London, and both Houses of Parliament suspending their sittings on the occasion.

Early in the morning—at seven o'clock (the hour of the birth of the princess)—a band of vocal and instrumental musicians performed a serenade in Kensington Gardens close to the palace. The princess, always an early riser, listened to this concert from a window, and requested the repetition of one of the pieces. The concert ended with the national anthem, in which the public, who

had been admitted to the gardens, joined very heartily. Kensington was *en fête:* flags were flying, bells ringing, and everywhere there were signs of holiday gladness; while, during the day, a succession of carriages brought friends to express their warm congratulations, and, of course, there was a long succession of receptions and of the interchange of good wishes, which were more than merely ceremonial. The presents were numerous and valuable, and doubtless the loving mementos from Coburg held a place and had a value of their own apart from their intrinsic worth. In the letters from the young prince at Bonn there are naturally few allusions to which reference can be made; but we can easily imagine the simple, manly, unaffected way in which the prince would write to his cousin on her birthday. He was no flatterer, and was far too much his own master to think he ought to be constantly reminding of his absence her to whom he stood in so peculiar a relation; but his messages, if brief, were tender and true. The circumstances did not admit of so-called love-letters, but the words used were such as to display and to evoke a serene confidence. "A few days ago," he wrote to his father, soon after the birthday of the princess, "I received a letter from Aunt Kent, inclosing one from our cousin. She told me I was to communicate its contents to you, so I send it on with a translation of the English. The day before yesterday I received a second and still kinder letter from my cousin, in which she thanks me for my good wishes on her birthday. You may easily imagine that both these letters gave me the greatest pleasure."

The state-ball at St. James's Palace was very magnificent, and though the absence of the King, in consequence of the severity of his illness, during which the Queen found it necessary to remain near him, caused much disappointment, it

was, perhaps, felt that the duties which therefore devolved on the youthful princess were all the more significant. This was, of course, the first occasion on which her royal highness took precedence of the Duchess of Kent and, indeed, of every person present, occupying the central chair of state supported by the duchess and the Princess Augusta.

The illumination of the streets of the metropolis, and the various demonstrations of popular rejoicing throughout the country, were followed by successive addresses of congratulation, the earliest being those of the corporation of the city of London, which were presented by the lord-mayor, aldermen, and representatives of the common council. The Duchess of Kent replied with great tact and good sense to these addresses, and the princess also occasionally responded briefly, but with much grace and self-possession, to some of those specially intended for herself.

The position of the princess, so young, so liable to become the object of political intrigue, so certain, amidst the jealousies and rancours of parties, to be placed in a position of great difficulty, needed a faithful, independent, and disinterested adviser, possessed of consummate ability, and yet able to keep in the background, and to give no reason for suspicion that any advice given or assistance rendered would have any other motive than that of dutiful regard and willing service. Such a faithful adviser and assistant King Leopold had found in Stockmar, and, turning to Stockmar once more to help him in the task that was dear to his heart, that self-sacrificing servant and affectionate philosopher responded without delay. On the 25th of May, the day following the eighteenth birthday of the princess, he arrived in England.

Perhaps no other man could have fulfilled the precise

position occupied by Stockmar, for he was in some sense the friend and guardian of the personal interests of the princess, and this continued for some months after she came to the throne; while on the other hand—though there were, of course, accusations of "German" influence and undue interposition—he carefully refrained from interfering in any affairs of state. Stockmar was trusted and his integrity was thoroughly acknowledged by ministers and by leading men of both parties, who gave voluntary testimony to his ability as well as his worth and disinterested motives. From love for those whom he served, he consented to long and frequent separations from the wife and children for whom he had an ardent affection. He had, by force of circumstances, been so placed as to be able, by his personal qualifications, to do much to influence the conditions of some of the reigning families of Europe, and his loyalty to Leopold of Belgium, to the Princess Victoria, and to the House of Coburg, especially so far as Prince Albert was concerned, was undoubted, though it is worthy of record that with regard to the proposal for the marriage of the prince with the future Queen of England, Stockmar spoke with his usual plainness in reference to the qualifications which the prince must be able to attain to fit him for so responsible and arduous a position. Even in his later correspondence with Prince Albert, his letters, though full of affection and sympathetic praise and encouragement, never lost the tone of serious exhortation.

The health of the King continued so seriously to decline that before the end of the month of May it was feared that he would not recover. He was too ill to be removed to Brighton, as had been intended, and there was a general feeling of grief throughout the country, for William the Fourth was deservedly popular, his faults of hasty temper and of self-will having always

been redeemed by real good-nature, a kind and forgiving disposition, and a generous regard for all who had any claims on his good-will. In his last days, too, all the asperities and infirmities of temper seemed to fall away from him. His mind was serene, his manner placid, his whole demeanour that of a man who has sought and found in the blessed consolations of religion that gentle fortitude and loving consideration for others which combine to make the Christian character. To the last he continued to transact the official business of the country which required his personal attention.

His good and faithful Queen was with him constantly. He had anxiously desired to live over the anniversary of the battle of Waterloo—Sunday the 18th of June. At twelve minutes past two on the morning of Monday, the 19th of June, he passed away, and the Archbishop of Canterbury (Dr. Howley), Lord Conyngham (the lord chamberlain), the Earl of Albemarle (master of the horse), and Sir Henry Halford, the late King's physician, started at once to ride from Windsor to Kensington through the pearl-gray twilight before the dawn of that summer's day.

Everything was still as they neared London, for, though it was known that the King was in all probability sick unto death, his immediate dissolution was not anticipated, and no intelligence of it could have reached the metropolis before the arrival of the distinguished messengers at Kensington Palace. The event had been so little anticipated in that quiet household that, when they arrived at about five o'clock, they found nobody stirring, and had considerable difficulty in making their presence known. According to the account afterwards received, they knocked, thumped, and rang for a long time before they could rouse the porter at the gate; they were again kept waiting in the

court-yard, then turned into one of the lower rooms, where they seemed to be forgotten by everybody. They rang the bell, and desired that the attendant of the Princess Victoria might be sent to inform her royal highness that they requested an audience on business of importance. After another delay, and another ringing to inquire the cause, the attendant was summoned, and, with an apparently complete inability to understand that anything could be of more importance than her own special charge, stated that the princess was in such a sweet sleep she could not venture to disturb her. The archbishop and the lord chamberlain must have been lost in admiration at such an example of single regard to immediate and specific duty, but they had to explain that they had come to the Queen on business of state, and that even her sleep must give way to that. The word "Queen," perhaps, impressed the attendant with a sense that she might venture to wake her young mistress, who was so concerned at the probable news, and at her two visitors having been kept waiting on such an occasion, that, without causing a further delay of more than a few minutes, she came into the room attired in a shawl over a loose white night-gown, "her night-cap thrown off, and her hair falling upon her shoulders, her feet in slippers, tears in her eyes, but perfectly collected and dignified."

This is in effect the account given by Miss Wynn in the *Diary of a Lady of Quality* and there is reason for believing it to be substantially accurate. The intelligence was sudden and the occasion a very solemn one, but there was little time for reflection, as it was necessary at once to communicate with Lord Melbourne, that he might summon the privy-council without delay.

The archbishop and the lord chamberlain hastened to London: the message went forth, the privy-council was summoned

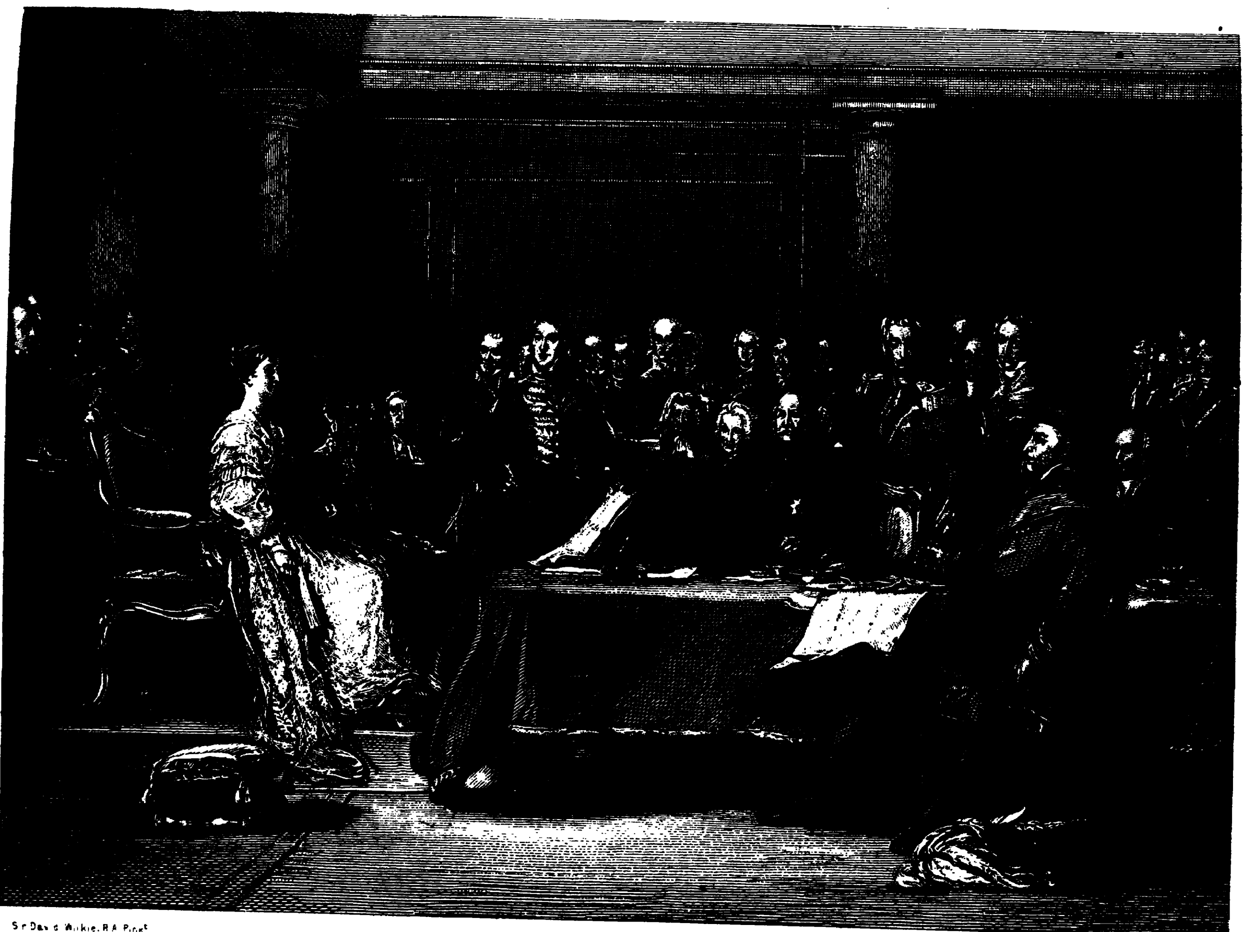
to attend at Kensington at eleven o'clock, and at that hour the youthful Queen, with the Duchess of Kent, entered the council chamber. Probably the best and most authentic account of the scene, and of the effect produced on the assembly by the appearance and conduct of the young princess thus suddenly placed in such an exalted situation, is that of the diarist who, even though his official position may be supposed to have influenced him in speaking of the occasion, his published journals show to have been an unsparing, if not a cynical and bitter, recorder of the scenes and events of which he was for so many years a witness. Greville, who was the clerk of the council, says in his journal:—"Never was anything like the first impression she produced, or the chorus of praise and admiration which is raised about her manner and behaviour, and certainly not without justice. It was very extraordinary, and something far beyond what was looked for. Her extreme youth and inexperience, and the ignorance of the world concerning her, naturally excited intense curiosity to see how she would act on this trying occasion; and there was a considerable assemblage at the palace notwithstanding the short notice which was given. The first thing to be done was to teach her her lesson, which, for this purpose, Melbourne had himself to learn. I gave him the council papers, and explained all that was to be done, and he went and explained all this to her. He asked her if she would enter the room accompanied by the great officers of state, but she said she would come in alone. When the Lords were assembled the lord-president informed them of the King's death, and suggested, as they were so numerous, that a few of them should repair to the presence of the Queen and inform her of the event, and that their lordships were assembled in consequence; and accordingly the two royal dukes (Cumberland and Sussex,

the Duke of Cambridge being at Hanover), the two archbishops, the chancellor, and Melbourne went with him. The Queen received them in the adjoining room alone. As soon as they had returned the proclamation was read, the doors were thrown open, and the Queen entered accompanied by her two uncles, who advanced to meet her. She bowed to the Lords, took her seat, and then, in a clear, distinct, and audible voice, and without any appearance of fear or embarrassment, read the following declaration: 'The severe and afflicting loss which the nation has sustained by the death of his Majesty, my beloved uncle, has devolved upon me the duty of administering the government of this empire. This awful responsibility is imposed upon me so suddenly, and at so early a period of my life, that I should feel myself utterly oppressed by the burden, were I not sustained by the hope that Divine Providence, which has called me to this work, will give me strength for the performance of it, and that I shall find in the purity of my intentions, and in my zeal for the public welfare, that support and those resources which usually belong to a more mature age and to longer experience. I place my firm reliance upon the wisdom of Parliament and upon the loyalty and affection of my people. I esteem it also a peculiar advantage that I succeed a sovereign whose constant regard for the rights and liberties of his subjects, and whose desire to promote the amelioration of the laws and institutions of the country, have rendered his name the object of general attachment and veneration. Educated in England under the tender and enlightened care of a most affectionate mother, I have learned from my infancy to respect and love the constitution of my native country. It will be my unceasing study to maintain the reformed religion as by law established, securing at the same time, to all, the full

enjoyment of religious liberty; and I shall steadily protect the rights and promote to the utmost of my power the happiness and welfare of all classes of my subjects.' She was quite plainly dressed, and in mourning. After she had read her speech and taken and signed the oath for the security of the Church of Scotland, the privy-councillors were sworn, the two dukes first by themselves, and as these two old men, her uncles, knelt before her, swearing allegiance and kissing her hand, I saw her blush up to the eyes, as if she felt the contrast between their civil and natural relations, and this was the only sign of emotion which she evinced. Her manner to them was very graceful and engaging; she kissed them both, and rose from her chair and moved towards the Duke of Sussex, who was furthest from her and too infirm to reach her."

The meeting of the council concluded by the cabinet ministers tendering to the Queen their seals of office, which she was graciously pleased to return, and they were then permitted to "kiss hands" on their reappointment. Arrangements had then to be made for the public proclamation, and the Queen appointed ten o'clock the next morning, June 21st, for the ceremony, which was to be at St. James's Palace.

On the following day, therefore, the young Queen, plainly dressed in deep mourning, with white tippet and cuffs, and a border of white lace under a small black bonnet, went thither, accompanied by her mother and ladies in attendance and with an escort of cavalry, and was there met by members of the royal family, cabinet ministers, and officers of the household. It must indeed have been a trying occasion, and one likely to flutter even steady nerves, so that there is little to wonder at in finding it recorded that when Lord Melbourne and Lord Lansdowne led her to the window of the presence-chamber overlooking



Sir David Wilkie, R.A. Pinxt

F. Fraenkel. Sc.

QUEEN VICTORIA'S FIRST COUNCIL

the court-yard, which was filled with heralds, pursuivants, robed officials, and "civic dignitaries," she looked fatigued and pale. There was an immense concourse of people, and on her appearance the cheering and acclamations were most enthusiastic.

The scene in the court-yard was very imposing, and as the sonorous tones of the herald gave emphasis to the solemn wishes that closed the proclamation, and the trumpets blared out, the assembly cheered, and the stirring notes of the band playing the national anthem burst forth, the young heart was too full. A sense of the great position, the solemn responsibility, smote upon the sovereign who was yet a child, and tears were on the youthful face as she turned with a pathetic look to the mother who thenceforth would have a difficult and sometimes a painful task to observe. Her daughter, as sovereign, must now be, in a certain sense, separated from her—no longer to obey, but officially, at anyrate, to command—while the duchess must avoid all that might seem to bear the appearance of undue influence, or could be construed into an assumption of power or authority in the counsels of her daughter. But the tears were there, for nothing ever could or did make Victoria other than truthful and natural, and it was a time when emotion stirred every breast. Those who were present saw and deeply sympathized; the sight of the weeping Queen caused other tears to flow in renewed springs of loyalty and love.

There was but one sentiment throughout the country with regard to the personal admiration and affection with which the young Queen was welcomed; and her abandonment of the name Alexandrina for her second name Victoria in assuming the royal title met with general approval, though it necessitated a change in the rolls documents of the House of Lords, and in the printed form of the oath to be presented to the members of the

House of Commons. It is true that apprehensions, which were not altogether without reason, existed among the older members of the Tory party. The Melbourne ministry was not likely to be subjected to such vicissitudes as it had suffered from the disaffection of the late sovereign, and as the Queen had, it was believed, been taught to look upon the Whigs as her friends, and had even been educated in Whig principles, the opposition could scarcely look forward to a return to power. Indeed, the Duke of Wellington is reported to have regarded the accession of the young Queen as a distinct disablement of himself and his colleagues, and he was represented to have said, "I have no small-talk, and Peel has no manners," a remark which we can only infer, from the gallantry of the speaker and his admiration for Peel, was made in a half jesting or satirical manner, for Wellington, like the rest of the world, looked with interested admiration on the girl sovereign.

The succession of a female to the throne severed the connection between the kingdoms of Britain and Hanover, which had been maintained ever since George I. reigned over both countries. Probably nobody in this country was sorry for the separation, for Hanover was of little advantage to us, and yet entailed considerable expenses, which had been paid out of English taxation. If any sentimental regret yet lingered in the minds of any, it may have been dispersed by the reflection that, by the death of William IV., it was the Duke of Cumberland who became King of Hanover, and that this country would be well rid of the man who had been accused, and not acquitted, of having conspired to set aside the succession of a queen, to the oath of allegiance to whom he was now the first to attach his signature.

On the 22d of June a royal message was laid on the table of

both houses of parliament, stating that in the judgment of her Majesty it was inexpedient that any new measures should be recommended for adoption beyond such as might be requisite for carrying on the public service from the close of the session to the meeting of the new parliament on the 15th of November; and the address was unanimously agreed to. Sir Robert Peel, in a speech of great eloquence, expressed the general sentiments of all parties when he said: "I will venture to say that there is no man who was present when her Majesty, at the age of eighteen years, first stepped from the privacy of domestic life to the discharge of the high functions which, on Tuesday last, she was called on to perform, without entertaining a confident expectation that she who could so demean herself was destined to a reign of happiness for her people and glory for herself. There is something which art cannot emulate and lessons cannot teach; and there was something in that demeanour which could only have been suggested by a high and generous nature. There was an expression of deep regret at the domestic calamity with which she had been visited, and of a deep and awful sense of the duties she was called upon to fulfil; there was a becoming and dignified modesty in all her actions, which could, as I have already observed, only have been dictated by a high and generous nature, brought up, no doubt, under the guidance of one to whose affection, care, and solicitude she is, and ought to be, deeply grateful. I trust I have said enough to convince the house that all persons, without reference to party distinctions, and in the oblivion, on this day, of all party differences, join in the expression of cordial condolence with her Majesty on the loss which she and the country have sustained, and in the most heart-felt wish that we are now at the commencement of a long, a prosperous, and a happy reign."

There was something peculiarly charming in the presence of this young and innocent girl—something perhaps almost bewildering in the notion that with her an entirely new relation would be established between the ministry and the crown. "If she had been my own daughter I could not have desired to see her perform her part better," said the Duke of Wellington bluntly, and probably forgetting in his paternal admiration his rather bitter impression that neither he nor Peel would be among her counsellors. Even Greville himself, the unsparing critic and recorder of the doings of his contemporaries, was under the same influence, for he says, "she appears to act with every sort of good taste and good feeling, as well as good sense; and so far as it has gone, nothing can be more favourable than the impression she has made, and nothing can promise better than her manner and conduct do."

A letter written, on the 26th of June, 1837, to the young Queen by her cousin, was as simple as it was judiciously unassuming. There is no suggestion in it of any expectation or mutual understanding.

"My dearest Cousin,—I must write you a few lines, to present you my sincerest felicitations on that great change which has taken place in your life.

"Now you are Queen of the mightiest land of Europe, in your hand lies the happiness of millions. May Heaven assist you, and strengthen you with its strength in that high but difficult task.

"I hope that your reign may be long, happy, and glorious, and that your efforts may be rewarded by the thankfulness and love of your subjects.

"May I pray you to think likewise sometimes of your cousins in Bonn, and to continue to them that kindness you

favoured them with till now. Be assured that our minds are always with you. I will not be indiscreet and abuse your time. Believe me always, your Majesty's most obedient and faithful servant, ALBERT."

In Brussels, wnere the princes had been staying, the report that a marriage was contemplated between the young Queen of England and Prince Albert had been considerably talked about, and it was therefore desirable, as no definite proposals of the kind had been made, or were likely to be made for some time to come, that the princes should withdraw from public notice by making a quiet tour in Switzerland and Italy. This was quite in accordance with Prince Albert's views, and accordingly the vacation from college at Bonn was spent in a delightful journey, which ended by crossing the Simplon into Italy, and visits to the Italian lakes, Milan, and Venice.

At this time there had been no understanding whatever with regard to the relations between the Prince and the Queen. There was no engagement, no words of "courtship" had passed, and by the etiquette which rules sovereigns no actual proposal of marriage could be first directly made except by the Queen herself. It requires a moment's thought to enable youths and maidens not of royal rank to realize the difficulties of such a situation. Such communications as passed between the cousins were necessarily a little guarded, simple as they may have been. Amidst all the excitement of her accession to the throne and her approaching coronation, and even afterwards when she was learning to realize the privileges and responsibilities of royalty, the young Queen may secretly, and perhaps half unconsciously, have cherished the thought that among the distinguished students at the old university of Bonn, or on the route to some scene famous in history, or for natural beauty, or treasures

of art, a young prince—who by nobility, personal beauty, high aims and attainments, and manly purity of life, was peer to any sovereign or potentate—bore her image in his heart and memory, but she could at present make no sign. Nor could he do more than remember that his fair young cousin, from an eminence almost perilous, might be looking forward to the day when it would be required of her to say whether the whispered hopes and anticipations of those who had been their best friends in infancy and childhood, should be realized. Both his position and his personal independence of character forbade his taking for granted that he would be regarded even as a suitor for the Queen's hand, but at the same time his loyal simplicity, his manly patience, and tranquillity of soul, enabled him to observe the sweet courtesies of cousinly regard without for a moment overstepping the bounds of princely etiquette. An alpine rose from the summit of the Rigi, a scrap of the writing of Voltaire obtained from an old servant of the philosopher when a visit was paid from Geneva to the house at Ferney, a book containing views of nearly all the places visited on the journey in Switzerland and Italy, and forming a small album, with the dates at which each place was visited in the prince's handwriting,[1] were tokens sent to show that in the midst of his travels he often thought of his young cousin.

The old palace of Kensington was no longer to be the home of the Duchess of Kent and the youthful sovereign; but their departure has been associated with a very happy reminiscence of the kindness of heart which has always characterized our sovereign Lady. The old soldier who had once been a servant of the Duke of Kent still lived in a cottage not far from the palace, and he and his family had been cared for and visited

[1] This album the Queen has always considered to be one of her greatest treasures.

by the princess. Two of that family, a boy and girl, had always been weak and ailing, and the boy had died, but the girl lived and was made happy by the visits of the princess. A few days after the Queen had quitted Kensington the clergyman of the parish called to see the invalid, and found her radiant with delight. When he inquired the reason she drew a little book from under her pillow, with smiles lighting the tears which filled her eyes, saying: "Look what the new Queen has sent me to-day;" and went on to explain that it was a book of Psalms, and that one of the Queen's ladies had brought it, with the message that though obliged to leave Kensington, the young Queen of England did not forget her: that the lines and figures in the margins of the book marked the dates of the days on which the Queen herself had been accustomed to read those particular psalms, and that the "book marker," with a little peacock worked on it, had been made by the Queen's own hands while she was still the Princess Victoria.

It has been recorded that on the death of William the Fourth the widowed Queen Adelaide had written to her niece saying that she desired to remain for a time at Windsor Castle, and that the young Queen immediately replied by a letter of condolence, in which she asked her to remain as long as she pleased and to consult only her own convenience. This reply was addressed to "the Queen of England," and a lady in attendance calling the attention of the young sovereign to this, said: "Your Majesty is now Queen of England;" to which the answer was, "I am aware of it, but the widowed Queen is not to be reminded of it by me." Whether this is to be regarded as an actual incident or not, it is to some extent supported by the fact that the queen-dowager was afterwards properly enough spoken of by her niece as "the Queen," and "our dear Queen Adelaide."

The suffering widowed queen had been present in the royal closet of the chapel of St. George's, Windsor, on the occasion of the funeral of the King, which took place on the evening of the 8th of July, attended by members of the royal family, the Duke of Sussex being the chief mourner. On the 13th, the Duchess of Kent and the young Queen took up their abode at Buckingham Palace, in which several alterations had now been made, and some new buildings added on the south.

The last drawing-room of the former reign had been held at St. James's Palace early in June; the first under the new régime was almost immediately after the arrival of her Majesty at Buckingham Palace. Of course the court was in deep mourning, the young sovereign wearing black crape with jet embroidery over black silk, the star of the order of the Garter alone relieving it; but the royal bearing and striking appearance of the *petite* but graceful figure, and the fair young face elicited the genuine admiration of those who attended in very large numbers to witness the girl Queen presiding over her court, and to introduce the *debutantes* who were in a flutter of excitement to be presented. But even more important duties had to be fulfilled.

On the 17th of July the Queen went in state to the House of Lords to dissolve parliament. The streets were crowded, and an enormous concourse of persons assembled to welcome the young sovereign with shouts and acclamations. On this her first appearance before her parliament her Majesty was superbly attired in a robe of white satin, the ribbon of the Garter across her shoulder. She wore a tiara of magnificent diamonds and a necklace of brilliants, the front of the dress being also adorned with brilliants of great lustre. She, of course, assumed the crimson robe of state on entering the

house. At the sound of the trumpets peers and peeresses rose and remained standing till her Majesty ascended the throne, Lord Melbourne standing near her and ready to instruct her in the usual formalities, the first of which was to request those present to be seated, which was done in a low but audible tone and with courteous gesture. In addressing the assembly, including, of course, members of the House of Commons present, her Majesty said: "I have been anxious to seize the first opportunity of meeting you, in order that I might repeat in person my cordial thanks for your condolence upon the death of his late Majesty, and for the expression of attachment and affection with which you congratulated me upon my accession to the throne. I am very desirous of renewing the assurances of my determination to maintain the Protestant religion as established by law; to secure to all the free exercise of the rights of conscience; to protect the liberties and to promote the welfare of all classes of the community. I rejoice that in ascending the throne I find the country in amity with all foreign powers; and while I faithfully perform the engagements of the crown, and carefully watch over the interests of my subjects, it will be the constant object of my solicitude to maintain the blessings of peace." The manner in which the young Queen read her speech—the perfect self-possession, the clear and musical accents of a voice which, though not loud, was of a quality that caused every syllable to be heard throughout the assembly—caused admiration amounting to enthusiasm. No less competent a judge than Miss Fanny Kemble afterwards wrote: "The serene serious sweetness of the candid brow and clear soft eyes gave dignity to the girlish countenance; while the want of height only added to the effect of extreme youth of the round but slender person and gracefully moulded hands and arms. The Queen's voice was

exquisite, nor have I ever heard any spoken words more musical in their gentle distinctness than 'My Lords and Gentlemen,' which broke the breathless silence of the illustrious assembly, whose gaze was rivetted on that fair flower of royalty. The enunciation was as perfect as the intonation was melodious."

The court had returned to Buckingham Palace on the first days of November, and the Queen had accepted an invitation to dine with the lord-mayor and corporation of the city of London at the Guildhall on the 9th. This was the first visit of her Majesty to the city, and preparations were made for a magnificent reception. In spite of inclement weather and the murky atmosphere of a November day, a great crowd lined the route from Buckingham Palace to Cheapside. The Queen, who rode in the state carriage attended by the mistress of the robes and the master of the horse (Lord Albemarle), was greeted with continued acclamation, and her appearance elicited hearty admiration. She was attired in a very beautiful dress of pink satin shot with silver, and her fair hair shone beneath the wreath-shaped tiara which became her so well. The bells of the churches pealed forth, and the flags and banners that decorated the streets, the crimson hangings, green boughs, and flowers that adorned many balconies and windows, together with the coloured lamps formed into devices for an illumination at night, gave an aspect of warmth and freshness even on that November day. Conspicuous, because of his well-known face and figure, and made more noticeable by the repeated bursts of cheering that greeted his appearance, was the Duke of Wellington, who received these thunders of applause with his customary salute of two fingers to the brim of his hat. His usual calm imperturbable smile and a twinkle of the eye showed a certain sense of humour as well as of pleasure as he recognized

the change of front presented to him by the public since he was hissed during the Reform Bill days.

At Temple Bar, which then stood with its massy gates marking the boundary between the City and the Strand, the lord-mayor, sheriffs, and aldermen had mounted horses brought from the artillery barracks at Woolwich, each horse being led by the soldier to which it belonged. On the approach of the Queen the lord-mayor dismounted, and, holding the civic sword of state, awaited her Majesty on the south side of the gate. The royal carriage stopped at the gateway in the rain while the chief magistrate delivered the keys to her Majesty, who at once graciously returned them amidst the cheers of the people, who filled the streets and the windows, from attic to basement, and the seats and scaffoldings erected for the occasion. The lord-mayor then took his place immediately before the royal carriage, the other civic authorities formed in procession, and went on to the Guildhall, where they arrived at about five o'clock. The lord-mayor assisted her Majesty to alight at the gate, and the lady-mayoress and the attendant civic maids of honour stood to receive her. The council chamber, converted into a drawing-room, and the royal boudoir, were sumptuously decorated in crimson, gold, and white satin. The Queen was attended by her mother the Duchess of Kent, the Duchess of Cambridge, and the Duchess of Gloucester.

In the drawing-room a loyal address from the city of London was read by the recorder, and fitly responded to by the youthful Queen, who, on dinner being announced, was conducted to the grand old hall by the lord-mayor and lady-mayoress—Sir John and Lady Cowan—who stood on either side of her Majesty as she took her seat at the royal table, till she requested them to be seated at their own table, where they were to preside over the

company, which included cabinet ministers, foreign ambassadors, and many of the nobility, as well as city dignitaries and members of the common council. All eyes, all hearts were directed to that small, slight figure in the central chair of state—the child that so many remembered not long before, riding or running in the gardens at Kensington—now the girl Queen of a vast empire, and resplendent in the sheen of the diamonds that flashed on her brow and neck, and the jewel and "George" that sparkled from her shoulder. The Duchesses of Kent, Cambridge, Gloucester, and Sutherland (mistress of the robes), the Dukes of Sussex and Cambridge, and her Majesty's two cousins Prince George and Princess Augusta of Cambridge, sat on either side of her at the royal table. The banquet was as profuse as civic banquets are, but there was an air of mingled state and sentiment pervading the assembly, and not till after the "*Non nobis, Domine*" was sung, and a flourish of trumpets had heralded the announcement that the lord-mayor gave the toast of "Our most gracious Sovereign Queen Victoria," did the enthusiasm of the company find voice. The national anthem was sung with vehement emphasis, and the Queen rose and bowed with evident gratification. Then the trumpets blared again and the common crier announced that her most gracious Majesty the Queen gave the toast of "The Lord-mayor and Prosperity to the City of London." A selection of music followed, and then the final toast by the lord-mayor, "The Royal Family." At half-past eight, after partaking of tea in the drawing-room, the Queen left the hall, accompanied to her carriage by the lord-mayor, to whom she said, shaking hands with him as he stood at the step, "I assure you, my lord-mayor, that I have been most highly gratified." At the end of Cheapside, amidst a strange gleamy mist, composed partly of

fog and partly of the beams of the illuminations, the cortége stopped for a few minutes to listen to the national anthem sung by the Harmonic Society accompanied by a band of wind-instruments, and followed by multitudinous cheers the royal party returned to Buckingham Palace. The value of the plate used at the Guildhall on the occasion of this banquet was valued at from £300,000 to £400,000.

On the lord-mayor, Sir John Cowan, a baronetcy was conferred, and on the sheriffs, Mr. John Carroll and Mr. Moses Montefiore, the honour of knighthood, the latter gentleman being the first member of the Jewish community who had received that distinction.

At the general election, which quickly followed the dissolution of parliament, the Whigs said a great deal too much of the influence which their party exercised in the councils of the young Queen, and this had the effect not only of weakening their cause, but of discrediting the ministry and even the Queen herself, by the charge of political favouritism and undue authority conceded to Lord Melbourne as the adviser of the sovereign. It was undoubtedly true that the prime-minister had from the time of her accession been the trusted adviser and instructor of the Queen, and there was perhaps no man more capable of imparting a knowledge of political and state affairs in a manner at once unprejudiced and disinterested,—no man who, to the experience which comes of age and long acquaintance with statesmanship, united more of that ease and grace of manner which takes from serious counsel the appearance of dictation, and from important instruction the air of authoritative teaching. He was no strenuous politician, and therefore many solemn doctrinaires abused him for being indifferent to what they regarded as the best interests of the country. He hated

"humbug" and pretence, and therefore fell into what was, if not pretence, an affectation of *laisser faire.* The man who, while receiving a deputation, would balance a sofa-cushion in his hands, or blow at the feather of a quill pen, though diligently listening all the time, would not be likely to be credited with profound political convictions. Even his shrewd common-sense would be very liable to be misinterpreted, when, after considering some question which his colleagues thought demanded immediate attention, but which he regarded as unnecessary or premature, he would say: "Can't we leave it alone?" If there was one thing about which he was really indifferent it was his own exaltation. He had little of the pride of place or power, and simply laughed away the Queen's proposal to bestow upon him the blue ribbon of the Garter as a mark of her gratitude. "A garter may attach to us somebody of consequence whom nothing else would reach," he replied; "but what would be the use of my taking it? I cannot bribe myself!" Acute observers like Sydney Smith and Lord Lansdowne saw and said that his appearance of indifference was only assumed, that he was really a man with a capacity for hard work, but one who offered, by his pretence of levity, a kind of practical sarcasm on the solemnity of Peel and the volcanic energy of Brougham. Even in his accomplishments—and he was a man not only of elegant and courtly manners but of great culture—he assumed a dilettante air, while those who knew him best were aware that he was a hard reader, his studies extending to an unusual knowledge of the works of the fathers of the Church.

Before Lord Melbourne had, at fifty-eight years of age, given up the greater part of the time left him for rest or leisure from his duties as prime-minister to the instruction and friendly guardianship of his young sovereign, there had been constant

complaints and suspicions about the supposed influence of the Baroness Lehzen, who for a short time acted as private secretary as well as lady in attendance on the Queen. After she had retired from that position, there were mutterings which grew into open accusations of the interference and authority of Baron Stockmar, and of the influence which, it was hinted, he exercised not only on the Queen, but on Melbourne and the government. That this charge was without foundation Melbourne knew well enough, and he sometimes said so in unmistakable terms; but the declaration that "German" influence and Whig monopoly had joined to ruin the country, made a strong party cry at the time of the election. It must be granted, also, that the opposition had much reason for the animosity which they displayed, in the conduct of some of the ministerialists, who went to the hustings with the swagger of being supported by the favour of the young Queen, and, as their opponents said, "placarded with her Majesty's name, as though they expected the Whig ministry, with Melbourne as premier, to be maintained in perpetual authority."

At this time, however, though there were inimical influences at work, and her uncle the King of Hanover was already writing to his correspondents in England letters that were offensive, and were soon to be followed by others that were malignant, there was little or no diminution of the exuberant loyalty which was manifested for the Queen. It may be said, too, that whatever may have been the influence of Melbourne's kindly and unselfish devotion, it would have been futile even for him to have endeavoured to reduce the young sovereign to a cipher. From the very first she set herself assiduously, not only as far as possible to control her own household and to establish the order of the daily observances and recreations, but

to the business of state, and to the understanding of all that was required from her, so that she would refuse to sign a state document or a paper of any importance until she understood not only its meaning and intention, but its probable consequences. It is even said that on one occasion she insisted on delaying to place her name to a paper that was considered to be immediately important because Lord Melbourne had represented that it was "expedient;" her reply being that she had been taught that anything might be right or wrong, but she could not understand expediency in such a serious matter, and must first, as far as possible, thoroughly acquaint herself with the meaning of what she was asked to sign.

The results of the election were that the former government returned to power with a small majority and considerably weakened in reputation. This, however, did not affect the loyalty of the opposition, and when parliament had reassembled and on the 12th of December the Queen asked the House of Commons for an addition to the provision made for the Duchess of Kent, the income of the duchess was increased from £22,000 to £30,000 a year. There was some debate over the proposals made for the civil list. The Queen had placed unreservedly in the hands of parliament the hereditary revenues transferred to the public by the late King, and it was pointed out, while former sovereigns had inherited considerable property, Victoria had not even the revenues of Hanover, which had now become a separate kingdom. Eventually the sum of £385,000 was voted as the annual income of the sovereign, of which £60,000 was the amount for the privy-purse.

It may be said of the Queen, that the healthy tone of mind and body which had resulted from her previous education preserved her from many mistakes which might have been serious.

Her position was a very difficult one, and only a strong conscientious desire to do right, and to fulfil even the most trying obligations of the high station to which she had been called, would have enabled her to enter so thoroughly into the business of the state. Yet she retained that simple buoyancy and love of fun which belonged to her youth. She had the happy faculty of working when she worked and playing when she played; and though some slight records of the ordinary daily life of the royal household seem to point to the fact that the routine was rather formal and sometimes a little dreary, there is a certain pathetic interest in imagining the girl Queen arranging the proprieties and the amusements, the duties and recreations of the royal establishment.

One paramount duty was not forgotten. Directly the civil list was settled and her Majesty knew how much money she had to spend, she had said to Lord Melbourne, "My father's debts must be paid;" and so heartily did the daughter mean what she said, that within the following year she had paid them. In the next twelvemonths the obligations incurred by the Duchess of Kent during the years that she had held an onerous and difficult position were also discharged.

The opening of parliament—her first parliament—by the Queen had been the occasion of another great demonstration of loyalty and attachment as she went in state through the streets, and the concourse of people assembled at and near the approaches to Westminster was as great as that which had awaited the prorogation. Again her Majesty performed with admirable self-possession the formal duties of royalty, and in a clear and audible voice repeated after the lord-chancellor the declaration which involves a solemn denial of those tenets of the Church of Rome which are opposed to the belief of English Protestants.

There were many topics of importance to engage the attention of the legislature, for there was much distress in the manufacturing districts and many signs of political agitation, which took the form of what was called Chartism, and a demand for the repeal of the taxes on food imported from abroad. There were symptoms of serious troubles in Lower Canada, where disturbances had arisen from the opposition offered by the Canadian legislature to resolutions carried in the House of Commons in March, 1836, declining to make the council of Lower Canada elective, continuing the charter of the Land Company, and authorizing the provincial government, independent of the legislature, to appropriate the money in the treasury for the administration of justice and the support of the civil government. Early in the year Lord John Russell had pointed out that since October, 1832, no provision had been made by the legislators of Lower Canada for defraying the charges of the administration of justice or for the support of civil government in the province. The arrears amounted to a very large sum, which the House of Assembly refused to vote, and at the same time demanded an elective legislative council and entire control over all branches of the government.

Thus the political and social atmosphere was less serene than might have been desired at a time when the youth and inexperience of the sovereign needed the support of a stronger ministry than that which was accused of clinging to office by virtue of the prime-minister having become mentor to the throne; but the popularity of the Queen herself continued both in parliament and in the country. The royal speech had concluded with the words: "In meeting this parliament, the first that has been elected under my authority, I am anxious to declare my confidence in your loyalty and wisdom. The early age at which

I am called to the sovereignty of this kingdom renders it a more imperative duty that under Divine Providence I should place my reliance upon your cordial co-operation and upon the love and affection of all my people."

That reliance was not misplaced. Notwithstanding the seething of public opinion and the signs of coming political conflict, the whole nation was more immediately concerned with the preparations for the coronation, which was to take place on the 28th of June in the following year. It was not only that the ceremony was to be gorgeous and imposing, and the signs of rejoicing splendid and appropriate; but the national sentiment, which had been deeply moved at the accession of a young and innocent girl to the throne, was maintained and even increased by all that was known of her. The expenses of the coronation were to be limited to £70,000, a considerable portion of which sum was expended on preparations and appointments for the ceremony at Westminster Abbey, to which, with the other most important ceremony in the life of her Majesty—her marriage—we may well devote a separate if a brief chapter.

CHAPTER III.

Preparations. Coronation Day. The Abbey. The Procession. The Ceremony. National Rejoicing. Court Festivities. The Prince Waits. Love Conquers. A Brief Wooing. Marriage of the Queen and Prince Albert. Grand Assemblies and Entertainments. Royal Life in London and Windsor.

For many weeks before the day fixed for the coronation all kinds of preparations were being made to celebrate the occasion. Coronation jewelry, ribbons, and ornaments of every kind were manufactured, medals were struck, portraits were engraved, pictures painted, concerts rehearsed, festivities organized. A new issue of coin with the Queen's image and superscription was to be made from the Mint, and in every town and shire there was to be feasting of rich and poor. On every cliff around the coast, on every hill where a beacon had flashed in olden time, a signal was to flame; in the London parks and on provincial fields and commons there were to be displays of fireworks; and in the streets of the metropolis, of old historic cities, or of modern towns that had grown round mills and factories, the windows of shops and houses were to be illuminated with wreaths and crowns and mottoes formed of coloured lamps or jets of gas with the letters V. R. ablaze at every corner, and even in quiet thoroughfares or sequestered by-ways a candle in every window-pane.

In place of the royal banquet in Westminster Hall, which had formed a feature of previous coronation observances, there was to be a grander and more imposing procession for the gratification of the people who would assemble to see the maiden Queen and her splendid cortége going to and returning from

the Abbey. The banquet for the few was to give place to the spectacle for the many; and Dymocke, the hereditary royal champion, was no more to fling down his gauntlet on the floor of the great hall and challenge all the world to gainsay the right of the royal claimant of the crown.

It is difficult to convey any adequate impression of the magnificence of the spectacle in Westminster Abbey on the occasion. The superb and ancient pile is in the form of a cross, the aisles from the royal entrance running west and east and the transepts north and south. The royal entrance led beneath the organ gallery to a "theatre" or raised platform twenty-four feet wide, and with a smaller platform on either side for those who were to take part in the ceremony. In the centre of the building immediately under the lantern was a raised dais or platform ascended by four steps covered with claret-coloured drapery and embroidered in gold. On this facing the altar stood the throne, or rather chair of state, on which her Majesty was to receive the homage of the vast assembly. It was a richly carved and gilded chair covered with crimson velvet and gold embroidery and emblazoned with the royal arms, and in front of it was a footstool similarly decorated. The galleries were so arranged that, rising like a vast amphitheatre, a view could be obtained of the general effect even from the loftiest of them, and that general effect was magnificent beyond description, for the decorations, sumptuous as they were, accorded well with the architectural character of the grand old building, which, it should be remembered, was not at that time crowded with the incongruous monuments and the aggressively prominent sculpture that has of late years tended to depreciate its matchless proportions and to distract the eye from its exquisite architectural beauty.

If the scene in the Abbey was designed to be grand and

impressive, the pageant of the state procession was well calculated to delight the vast multitude of people who by daybreak began to wend their way towards the parks, and to occupy the line of route from Buckingham Palace, up Constitution Hill, and along Piccadilly, St. James' Street, Pall Mall, Cockspur Street, Whitehall, and Parliament Street. It was computed that to the London population were to be added 400,000 persons who had come from the provinces and foreign countries to witness the spectacle. At seventeen minutes past three in the morning a salute of twenty-one guns, fired from the Tower of London, had heralded the dawn of that auspicious day, and though for some hours the skies looked threatening, and rain occasionally fell, nothing seemed to damp the ardour of the crowds that thronged the streets on foot or in every variety of vehicle. By six o'clock the thoroughfares mentioned were closely lined by expectant crowds, and every window, balcony, and platform was soon packed with those who had secured places; while at many private mansions, banks, and public buildings, and at the principal club-houses, great preparations had been made, not only for seeing the pageant, but for dispensing hospitality to invited guests. The Green Park, the Mall, and the inclosure of St. James' Park were thronged. At eight o'clock the band of the Life Guards played the national anthem, and soon afterwards the first carriages of the procession prepared to take their places. Equerries, trumpeters, and a squadron of Life Guards led the way, followed first by the carriages of the foreign ambassadors resident in this country, and next by those of the ambassadors and ministers-extraordinary who had come to represent foreign powers on the august occasion. They took precedence according to the date at which they had made known their arrival in England; and first was the ambassador from the Sultan—next

being the famous old warrior, Marshal Soult, Duke of Dalmatia, who had come to represent France. As the front of the pageant moved on through the closely-packed ranks of the people, a great shout arose and continued—a shout of hearty applause and generous welcome of the soldier who had come to visit us, no longer as a foe, but as a comrade of our own victorious duke. The white head bowed repeatedly in courteous recognition of these greetings, the rugged war-worn face was bright with smiles, and thereafter Marshal Soult was a firm friend of French and English alliance.

After the ambassadors came the elder members of the royal family. They were but few now, and the Princess Augusta, who was seventy years of age, was unable to be present, while the Princess Sophia was in such weak health that she feared the exertion and excitement of the occasion. The King and Queen of Hanover (Duke and Duchess of Cumberland) and the Princess Elizabeth of Hesse-Homburg were also absent. The carriages of the royal family and their attendants were drawn each by six horses, and accompanied by an escort of Life Guards. That of the Duchess of Kent came first, and the mother of the Queen was received with unbounded enthusiasm and applause, the police and troops having at some points to restrain the front ranks of the crowd from surging round the carriage in an attempt to shake hands with the duchess. The Duchess of Gloucester came next, and was followed by the Duke and Duchess of Cambridge and the Duke of Sussex, who was received with abundant manifestations of popular favour. Then came a procession of twelve royal carriages, each drawn by six horses, and conveying ladies of the bed-chamber, maids of honour, principal officers of the household, and her Majesty's suite, preceded by equerries, a regiment of the household brigade, the Queen's

bargemaster and forty-eight watermen, and followed by a squadron of Life Guards, the mounted band of the household brigade, and the brilliant military staff and officers, royal huntsmen and foresters, horses from the royal stables, decked in gay trappings, and led by grooms; the knight marshal, with his marshals, and yeomen mounted and on foot. The state coach was drawn by eight cream-coloured horses, and a yeoman of the guard walked at each wheel, and two footmen at each door; Viscount Combermere (gold stick) and the Earl of Ilchester, captain of the yeomen, riding on either side. With the Queen were the Duchess of Sutherland, mistress of the robes; the Earl of Albemarle, master of the horse; and the Duke of Buccleugh, captain-general of the Archer Guard. The pageant closed with an escort of six squadrons of Life Guards.

It was ten o'clock when the Queen entered her state carriage at Buckingham Palace, and two robust-looking sailors, who had charge of the flagstaff on the top of the Marble Arch at the entrance, set the royal ensign flying in the clear summer air as a mighty shout went up from the dense multitude. The clouds had dispersed, the sun shone out as with jubilant welcome, and the day became an example of what has since come to be known as "Queen's weather."

Amidst continuous outburst of cheering and acclamation the state carriage reached the west door of Westminster Abbey at half-past eleven o'clock. The great officers of state, the noblemen bearing the regalia, the Archbishops of Canterbury and York, the Bishops of Bangor, Lincoln, and Winchester, carrying the patina, the chalice, and the Bible, and the Bishops of Bath and Wells and of Durham, were there to receive her Majesty as she entered, all the bands playing the national anthem as she alighted, and her arrival being signalled by

the firing of a gun. The ambassadors and other distinguished personages had already been conducted to their seats before the Queen appeared from the robing-room, and the whole scene presented by that great and brilliant assembly amidst the superb decorations, which, with all their wealth of colour, were subordinated, toned, and harmonized by the "dim religious light" and the marvellous architecture of the gray old Abbey, was so magnificent that even oriental visitors and others, who were accustomed to witness the most splendid spectacles, paused to gaze around them with solemn wonder and admiration before they were conducted to their seats. The dais of cloth of gold bearing the throne; the altar, with its grand communion service of gold plate; and the chair of Saint Edward, or King Edward's chair,[1] which stood within the altar rails, were objects of the greatest interest.

At a little after twelve o'clock the gorgeous procession entered the choir amidst a profound silence which had succeeded to a burst of acclamation. First came the dean and prebendaries of Westminster, and then followed officers at arms,—the chief officers of the royal household, the lord privy-seal, the lord-president, and the lord-chancellor of Ireland. An officer from the Jewel Office bore upon a velvet cushion a sword for the offering at the altar, and the ruby ring which was to be used in the ceremony. Next came the Archbishops of Canterbury, York, and Armagh, with the lord-chancellor; and then the princesses of the blood royal, the Duchess of Cambridge, the Duchess of Kent, and the Duchess of Gloucester, in robes of state of purple velvet, and wearing circlets of gold on their heads, their coronets

[1] The chair in which the Scottish kings had been crowned before Edward I. brought it from Scotland in 1296.

carried by viscounts, their trains borne by noble ladies-in-waiting. Then came the bearers of the regalia: St. Edward's staff carried by the Duke of Roxburgh, the golden spurs by Lord Byron, the sceptre royal by the Duke of Cleveland, the sword of justice or temporality by the Marquis of Westminster, the sword of mercy by the Duke of Devonshire, another sword by the Duke of Sutherland. The lord great chamberlain of England—Lord Willoughby d'Eresby—preceded the royal Dukes of Cambridge and Sussex,—whose coronets and trains were borne by gentlemen of title,—the Duke of Norfolk, earl marshal of England, with his staff of office, and on either side Viscount Melbourne bearing the sword of state, and the Duke of Wellington, high constable of England, with staff and field-marshal's baton. The Duke of Richmond bearing the sceptre and dove, lord high steward the Duke of Hamilton bearing the crown—which has been named St. Edward's crown after the ancient one—and the Duke of Somerset bearing the orb, were followed by the bishops with the patina, Bible, and chalice. Then the Queen entered the choir wearing a royal robe of crimson velvet and ermine bordered with gold lace, the collars of the orders of the Garter, Bath, Thistle, and St. Patrick, and on her head a circlet of gold. Between the two bishops, who walked at either side, and the accompanying gentlemen-at-arms, she moved slowly but with graceful and dignified mien, and her face was animated and radiant.

Her Majesty's train was borne by eight ladies who even in that assembly were distinguished for grace and beauty: Lady Adelaide Paget, Lady Frances Cowper, Lady Anne Wentworth Fitzwilliam, Lady Mary Grimston, Lady Caroline Gordon Lennox, Lady Mary Talbot, Lady Catherine Stanhope, and Lady Louisa Jenkinson. The Duchess of Sutherland as

mistress of the robes, followed by Lady Lansdowne first lady of the bed-chamber, and the other ladies of the bed-chamber, and a bevy of maids of honour, came next. The brilliant procession, in which noble ladies, youthful pages, and gentlemen-at-arms attended to bear trains and carry coronets, and were many of them attired in gorgeous and picturesque costume, closed with the captain-general of the Royal Scottish Archer Guard and a following of officers of the yeomen of the guard and gentlemen-at-arms and their attendants.

During the procession, when every eye had been fixed on the Queen, the anthem "I was glad" was performed, and then the Westminster boys chanted *Vivat Victoria Regina.* The peers, peeresses, lords, and ladies who were not further engaged in the ceremony took their seats, and her Majesty moved towards the space between the throne of homage and the altar, where a faldstool had been placed before a chair. She then knelt down and after a few moments of silent prayer took her seat in the chair.

The rather intricate ceremonial commenced with "The Recognition." The Archbishop of Canterbury advanced to the Queen with the lord-chancellor, the lord-chamberlain, the lord high constable, and the earl marshal, preceded by the deputy garter, and said: "Sirs, I here present unto you Queen Victoria the undoubted Queen of this realm, therefore all you who are come this day to do homage, are you willing to do the same?" This was answered by the vast assembly with a loud cry of "God save Queen Victoria!" The archbishop, turning to the north, south, and west, repeated "God save Queen Victoria!" the Queen turning at the same time.

The patina, chalice, and Bible were placed on the altar

by the bishops who carried them in the procession. The Archbishop of Canterbury and the bishops who were to read the litany put on their copes. The Queen, attended by the Bishops of Bath and Wells and Durham, and the great officers of state, and noblemen carrying the regalia, advanced to the altar, knelt upon the crimson velvet cushion, and made her first offering of an altar-cloth of gold, which had been brought by an officer of the wardrobe and was handed to her Majesty by the great chamberlain. The archbishop placed it upon the altar, and the Queen then handed to him an ingot of gold of one pound weight, which had been brought by the treasurer of the household. This the archbishop placed in the oblation basin.

After prayer by the archbishop the regalia, except the sword, were laid on the altar, the great officers of state, except the lord-chamberlain, took up their respective places on the dais near the chair of state.

After the singing of the Sanctus the communion service was read by the Archbishop of Canterbury, the Bishop of Rochester reading the epistle, and the Bishop of Carlisle the gospel. The sermon was preached by the Bishop of London from the 31st verse of the 34th chapter of the 2d Book of Chronicles, "And the king stood in his place, and made a covenant before the Lord, to walk after the Lord, and to keep his commandments, and his testimonies, and his statutes, with all his heart, and with all his soul, to perform the words of the covenant which are written in this book."

Next came the administration of the coronation oath by the Archbishop of Canterbury, who advanced, and, standing before the Queen, asked, "Madam, is your Majesty willing to take the oath?" to which the Queen replied "I am willing."

Her Majesty then solemnly promised to govern the people of the United Kingdom and the dominions belonging to it according to the statutes in Parliament agreed on and the respective laws and customs of the same; to her power to cause law and justice, in mercy, to be executed in all her judgments; to the utmost of her power to maintain the laws of God, the true profession of the gospel, and the Protestant reformed religion established by law; and to maintain and preserve the settlement of the united Church of England and Ireland, and its doctrine, worship, discipline, and government as by law established within England and Ireland and the territories thereunto belonging, and to preserve to the bishops and clergy of England and Ireland, and the churches there committed to their charge, such rights and privileges as by law do or shall appertain to them.

Her Majesty, attended by her supporters and the lord great chamberlain, the sword of state being carried before her, went to the altar, and kneeling, laid her right hand upon the Gospels tendered to her by the archbishop, kissed the book, and signed a transcript of the oath. She then kneeling upon the faldstool, the choir sang the *Veni, Creator, Spiritus.* After preparatory prayer and the anthem "Zadok the Priest," &c., there followed the anointing. The Queen, having been disrobed of her crimson robe by the mistress of the robes, sat in the ancient chair of King Edward, four knights of the Garter, the Dukes of Buccleugh and Rutland, and the Marquesses of Anglesea and Exeter, holding a pall of cloth of gold. The Dean of Westminster poured some oil from the ampulla into the anointing spoon, and the archbishop anointed her Majesty on the head and hands, marking them in the form of a cross, saying, "Be thou anointed with holy oil as kings, priests, and prophets were anointed, and as Solomon was anointed king by Zadok the priest and Nathan the

prophet, so be you anointed, blessed, and consecrated Queen over this people, whom the Lord your God hath given you to rule and govern." After the invocation, the Queen knelt during the prayer and blessing. When she had resumed her seat, the golden spurs were taken from the altar by the dean and handed to the lord-chamberlain, and by him presented to her Majesty, who returned them to be laid again on the altar. Viscount Melbourne next delivered the sword of state to be laid on the altar by the archbishop, who repeated the prayer, "Hear our prayers, O Lord, we beseech thee, and so direct and support thy servant Victoria," &c. Then, accompanied by the other bishops, he gave the sword into the Queen's right hand, saying, "Receive this kingly sword, brought now from the altar of God and delivered to you by the hands of us, the servants and bishops of God, though unworthy." Then followed an exordium, and the sword having been restored to the altar, Lord Melbourne, according to ancient custom, redeemed it for a hundred shillings, and carried it unsheathed during the rest of the ceremony.

The Queen, when standing, was invested by the dean with the imperial mantle or declaration robe of cloth of gold, the Lord Great Chamberlain fastening the clasps. When she was again seated, the archbishop handed to her the orb with a suitable exordium before its return to the altar. Then followed the "investiture *per annulum et baculum*, by the ring and sceptre, the archbishop receiving the ruby ring and placing it on the fourth finger of the Queen's right hand. The dean then brought the sceptre with the cross and that with the dove and delivered them to the archbishop; and the Duke of Norfolk as Lord of the Manor of Worksop, left his seat to perform his ancient suit and service of presenting to her Majesty a glove, embroidered with the arms of Howard, for her right hand. This her Majesty put

on, and the duke stood by her to support her right arm and to hold the sceptre. The archbishop first delivered the sceptre of the cross, or royal sceptre, and then the sceptre of the dove, or rod of equity.

The actual "Coronation" followed, and this was really the grandest part of the ceremonial. The archbishop, placing the crown upon the altar, offered up a prayer to Almighty God on behalf of the Queen, that she might be crowned with all princely virtues—then, accompanied by the other prelates, he advanced towards the Queen, and receiving the crown from the Dean of Westminster, placed it reverently upon her head. At this moment, from every part of the grand edifice arose the cry "God save the Queen!"—a multitudinous shout accompanied by acclamations, the waving of hats and handkerchiefs;—trumpets blared out, drums beat, the peers and peeresses put on their coronets, the bishops their hats, the kings-at-arms their crowns, and the guns at the park and the Tower boomed out their signals. It would be difficult to imagine any scene more grand and imposing. Almost at the moment of the crown being placed on the head of the Queen a broad brilliant stream or ray of sunlight from one of the windows fell upon her and lighted up the jewels of the imperial diadem and the fair young face beneath it. Earlier in the ceremony, that one apparently small figure, made to look smaller by the long-trained robe, the surrounding pageantry, and the accompanying attendants, had been greeted with acclamations, not unmingled with tears. "She looked almost like a child," said one spectator, who noticed that those near him were affected as he was. But at the moment when the crown was placed upon her head, and that great burst of sound proclaimed her Queen indeed, amidst shouts and fanfares and psalms of rejoicing, the princess herself was visibly weeping,

and had to summon all her courage—or may we say the recollection of the sustaining goodness of God—to preserve her self-control. For a few seconds, it is said, she looked wistfully at her mother, who was herself so overcome with emotion as to be sobbing audibly, but in a few moments the young Queen had regained composure, perhaps because she could see expressions of sympathy, admiration, and affection in every face.

The Bible was next taken from the altar and presented to the Queen by the archbishop, to whom she restored it, that he might place it on the altar again. His grace then pronounced the benediction, the other bishops and the peers responding, and then, turning to the people, pronounced the invocation, "And the same Lord God Almighty grant," &c., after which the "*Te Deum*" was sung by the choir, and her Majesty removed to the chair of recognition, the two bishops (her supporters), the great officers of state, and the noblemen who had borne the regalia, attending her. The Queen then ascended the dais for the enthronment, the archbishop, bishops, and peers around her lifting her into the throne of state. After the exhortation "Stand firm and hold fast," &c., and having delivered the sceptre to the Lord of the Manor of Worksop and the Duke of Richmond, her Majesty received the homage of the peers, which was an imposing and interesting part of the august ceremony, having something of a feudal character. The Archbishop of Canterbury himself first knelt and did homage for himself and the other lords spiritual, who knelt around him, repeated the words after him, and succeeded him in kissing hands. The Dukes of Sussex and Cambridge followed, the Duke of Sussex saying the words, which were repeated by the Duke of Cambridge as follows:—"I do become your liegeman of life and limb and of earthly worship: and faith and truth I will bear unto you, to live and die,

Drawn by [illegible] Walter [illegible]

against all manner of folks. So help me God." The royal dukes each touched the crown upon the Queen's head and kissed her on the left cheek, and it was afterwards said that the Duke of Sussex, a man of very impressionable nature and then in infirm health, was so much affected that he could not control his emotion, and was assisted from the dais by peers in attendance. The other peers made their homage kneeling, the senior peer in each degree pronouncing the words, saying after him, and each of the same degree touching the crown and kissing her Majesty's hand. The Duke of Wellington, Earl Grey, and Lord Melbourne were loudly cheered as they ascended to the dais to perform the homage. While this ceremony was going on, the anthem, "This is the day," was sung, and the Earl of Surrey, treasurer of the household, threw silver coronation medals about the choir and lower galleries, and a decided scramble ensued, in which some of those present, including noble ladies, maids of honour, and pages, joined with such eagerness that some of the more sedate and punctilious onlookers were a little scandalized. This, however, was not the only incongruous incident of this part of the ceremony. Among those barons who came to pay homage was Lord Rolle, an old nobleman who had received George III., the Queen's grandfather, at his house in Devonshire, and had made that occasion one of great display. He was now more than eighty years of age, but though physically infirm, full of courage and loyalty, so that he made a brave attempt to mount the steps of the throne, supported by two noblemen to assist him, for he was a large heavy man. He had nearly reached the royal footstool when, either stumbling or missing his footing, he slipped through the hands of his supporters and fell, rolling over and over to the bottom step, where he lay coiled up in his robes till he was lifted up, when he tried

again and again to mount the steps. Meantime the Queen was much concerned at his efforts, and was seen to speak to Lord Melbourne, who stood at her shoulder, and on his bowing an affirmative she rose, and with a gentle smile held out her hand to the brave old man, who was excused from touching the crown. He was not hurt, and took his misadventure with the utmost good-humour, which was perhaps the reason that some foreigners present took for fact the representation of some unscrupulous jester, who said that the noble lord had only been observing a custom relating to feudal tenure, by which he held his title of Lord *Rolle*. Another version of the story attributed this jest to his lordship's own daughter, who was present.

The "homage" having been completed, the Queen prepared to receive the communion, and removing her crown, which was held by the Lord Chamberlain, knelt at the altar, and after returning to the archbishop the chalice and patina to be placed there, made the second offering of a purse of gold. Her Majesty, after receiving the sacrament, at once returned to the throne, where she again held the sceptre, remaining there till the end of the communion service, the anthem "Hallelujah! the Lord God omnipotent reigneth," the final prayers, and the blessing. Then attended, as before, with the swords carried before her, she went through the south door into St. Edward's Chapel, amidst the music of the organ and the orchestra. She delivered the sceptre with the dove to the archbishop, who laid it on the altar. She was then disrobed of her imperial robe of state and arrayed in her royal robe of purple velvet. With the swords carried before her the Queen went to the west door of the Abbey, the sceptre with the cross in her right hand, the orb in her left. Near the door the swords and the portions of the regalia which had not been again placed on the altar were received by the

officers of the Jewel Office, and her Majesty, wearing her crown, and the princes and princesses, peers and peeresses, wearing their coronets, returned to the palace in the same order as they had left it. Thus this splendid ceremony came to a close; it had lasted three hours, and the majority of those who occupied seats in the Abbey had been there some hours longer.

A state banquet at Buckingham Palace, where a hundred royal and noble guests were entertained, and afterwards, from windows and roofs, witnessed the fireworks in the park, closed the day, which, throughout the country, and among British communities in foreign lands and in distant colonies, was devoted to festivity and rejoicing. In London the holiday-making lasted all the week. On Friday, Saturday, and the following Monday a fair in Hyde Park was succeeded by a review, at which the Queen and some of her distinguished guests were present, and where old Marshal Soult again came in for popular applause, which he shared with the Duke of Wellington. Her Majesty appeared in an open barouche, with her aides-de-camp in full uniform.

There was a short season of repose at Windsor in the autumn and winter of 1838, when Leslie, the painter, went thither to obtain sittings of the Queen and the principal personages in her train for the coronation picture; but early in the year 1839, when the Queen had returned to London, an occurrence of a very painful nature threw a temporary shadow upon the social and domestic life of the court; and though her Majesty had no personal part in the circumstances that led to it, political jealousy and party calumny turned it to account in associating her ministry, and, by implication, the Duchess of Kent and the Queen herself, with what was a very sad and distressing mistake, and had been represented as a palace plot on the part of certain Whig ladies of the court.

It is not necessary to repeat all the details of the too-often-told story of Lady Flora Hastings, the lady who had borne the train of the Duchess of Kent at the coronation, and was in attendance on her royal highness at court. This lady was the daughter of Flora, Countess of Loudoun, and of Earl Moira, a distinguished soldier and statesman, who had been Governor-general of India, was created Marquis of Hastings, and died at Malta while he was governor-general there. She was dearly beloved by her relations, highly accomplished, and with reputation unblemished; and though her family had become "Conservative" in politics, she occupied a position of confidence at the court. Early in the year Lord Melbourne informed Sir James Clarke, the court physician, of a communication made by Lady Tavistock, one of the ladies of the Duchess of Kent's household, that the personal appearance of Lady Flora Hastings had given rise to the suspicion that she might have been privately married. This was a most serious imputation, and the more painful because it seemed to be somewhat justified by the appearance referred to, which had been noticed by the physician, who also attributed it to the cause that had been suggested. The Duchess of Kent expressed her entire disbelief in any imputation against the character of the lady, and in the conclusions which had been stated; but the imputation had been made, and farther inquiry was therefore deemed necessary. Lady Flora, after firmly and indignantly denying that there were any grounds for such a suspicion, submitted to an examination, which proved that the peculiarity referred to was caused by an internal disorder, and that there were no reasons for the insinuation that had been made. The Marchioness of Hastings, naturally indignant at the proceedings, and at the clumsy and blundering manner in which her daughter had been made a victim to suspicions, magnified

into accusations by Whig ladies of the court, demanded further inquiry into the origin of the slander, and called for the dismissal of Sir James Clarke as physician to her Majesty. These demands were not complied with, as Lord Melbourne considered that they were not reasonable, and the letter to the Queen, in which they were made, did not make them appear so. Lady Tavistock, on the other hand, declared that what had been said and done was for the honour of her Majesty and the character of the household, that the suspicion entertained should not be permitted to grow and spread. In writing an account of what was called "the Palace Conspiracy" to her uncle at Brussels, the unfortunate Lady Flora mentioned the tenderness of the Duchess of Kent, of whom she said that a mother could not have been kinder to her, while the Queen not only endeavoured to show her regret by her civility to her, but "expressed it handsomely with tears in her eyes." Whether the disease from which the poor lady was suffering had been increased by the anxiety and agitation cannot be declared, but she died four months afterwards at the palace, at the age of thirty-three.

The Tories, however, soon had another party cry of "Whig conspiracy," which immediate events gave them the opportunity of using with more or less effect.

On the 5th of February parliament was opened by the Queen, and the royal speech referred to events in Afghanistan which might make military operations necessary. Lower Canada was still in a disturbed condition, and hostile incursions had been made into Upper Canada by some lawless inhabitants of the United States of America. The Chartist agitation was also referred to, as its leaders in some parts of the country endeavoured to excite large assemblies to disobedience and resistance to the law, and to recommend dangerous and illegal practices,

for the counteraction of which the efficiency of the law, the good sense and right disposition of the people, and their attachment to the principles of justice and their abhorrence of violence and disorder would be depended on. The affairs of Ireland were still a cause of considerable agitation, and Daniel O'Connell was constantly maintaining it by addressing vast meetings, and using expressions of profuse loyalty to the Queen, while denouncing the Tories and the Orange societies, among whom there were speakers as violent and abusive against the Queen and her government. A measure relating to Irish municipal corporations was promised in the speech from the throne, and reference was made to further measures of law reform.

On the 6th of April there was a debate on the ministerial proposal temporarily to suspend the constitution of the Jamaica government, because of the alleged excesses and lawlessness of the planters. This was opposed by the Radicals, because of its alleged violation of Liberal principles, and their influence added to Conservative opposition left the government with only a majority of five. The ministers, who had contemplated a similar measure for Canada, therefore resigned, and Lord Melbourne advised her Majesty to send for the Duke of Wellington, who referred her to Sir Robert Peel. For two years the Queen had been in almost daily communication and in the most friendly relation to Lord Melbourne, in whom she had implicit confidence, and most of the ladies who were her friends and attendants in her household were, of course, included in her favourable estimate of the only ministry she had known. It probably did not much mitigate the somewhat constrained and reserved manner of Peel to be told by the Queen that she much regretted having to part with her

late minister, in whom she had confidence, but it was frankly said, and Peel was a man who appreciated frankness and that personal loyalty which gave sentiment to the Queen's regret. He lived to acquire the same confidence and the same high estimation, and it may be assumed that his already strong loyalty was not diminished by the young sovereign's outspoken expressions of favour to his opponents. Unfortunately for his immediate chance of a similar distinction, when he undertook to form a ministry, and sent to her Majesty a list of those who would be invited to become his colleagues, he also required that some of the first ladies of the royal household should resign their position, because of their relationship to members of the previous cabinet. The reason for this was that Ireland was becoming, or had become, the chief difficulty of the government, and indeed of any probable Conservative government, for the Whigs only held office by a kind of hollow alliance with O'Connell; and the wife of Lord Normanby, who had been Lord-lieutenant of Ireland, and the sister of Lord Morpeth, who had been Irish secretary under the Whig government, were in close attendance and companionship with the Queen.

It ought to have been made clear that the demand for the dismissal of the ladies of the bed-chamber meant only the chief ladies, for probably the Queen understood that she was to be separated from all those ladies, members of her household, with whom she had long been on terms of intimate companionship. In a personal interview, however, Sir Robert had intimated that it would be of great importance as an indication of her Majesty's confidence if certain offices of the household of the higher rank, which might not be voluntarily relinquished by the ladies holding them, were subject to some change; and he afterwards told his

proposed colleagues that he meant only those of the rank of ladies of the bed-chamber. The Queen stated in reply that she must reserve the whole of these appointments to herself. There was a slight touch of imperious temper here, and a touch of strong will, for her Majesty felt strongly on the subject, and was perhaps ruffled by a request which seemed, almost in the form of a demand, to aim at her private friendships. At all events she wrote next day: "The Queen, having considered the proposal made to her yesterday by Sir Robert Peel, to remove the ladies of the bed-chamber, cannot consent to a course which she conceives to be contrary to usage, and is repugnant to her feeling." To this Sir Robert replied that he was reluctantly compelled by a sense of public duty and the interest of her Majesty's service to adhere to his opinion, and gratefully thanking her Majesty for the distinction conferred on him of requiring his advice and assistance to form an administration, it was his earnest prayer that whatever arrangements her Majesty might be enabled to make for that purpose might be most conducive to her personal comfort and happiness and to the promotion of the public welfare. So there was dignity on both sides, and the Melbourne ministry was recalled, a minute being adopted at a cabinet meeting to the effect that though the great offices of court and situations in the household held by members of parliament should be included in the political arrangements made on a change of administration, a similar principle should not apply to the offices held by ladies in her Majesty's household. It may be mentioned, however, that it has since been the custom for the ladies holding the higher offices to retire on a change of ministry.

It may be understood that the return of the Whig administration—not, as Melbourne declared, because he sought office, but because he would not hold back from assisting the sovereign

when his services were required—gave new occasion for political denunciation. O'Connell and others represented that the Queen, by refusing the demands of the Tories that she should dismiss her friends, had knowingly defeated Tory machinations and fully purposed keeping the Whigs in power. Thus she was becoming more and more identified with what was already a feeble, and, in some respects, an incompetent government. The excitement in London was very great, especially at the clubs and elsewhere, where it was reported that at the Queen's ball on the 10th of May her Majesty "had danced with Lady Normanby's son, and the Tories had looked foolish."

Court entertainments and festivities had necessarily become more frequent and more splendid since the coronation, and the addresses of congratulation, the bestowal of peerages and honours, and the royal receptions, assemblies, and visits that followed. Even at Windsor—though the ordinary domestic life, the morning's attention to the business of the state, the afternoon rides or drives, the music and singing, the rather formal but yet pleasantly friendly dinners, and the evening's conversation or listening to the music of the band were resumed—there were receptions of distinguished guests and pleasant quadrille parties, in which the Queen took part. For a short time after the political crisis just referred to there was some diminution in the expressions of loyalty that greeted her when she appeared in public. Some hostile hisses were heard amidst the acclamations on one or two occasions, especially when she visited Ascot; but they were to be attributed to violent partisans of the opposition, who sought to discredit the Queen that they might injure the ministry. The more ignorant of the public had expected that the influence of the youthful and amiable sovereign would lead to an immediate redress of all kinds of grievances.

There was, therefore, some disappointment, which was increased to a passing feeling of disloyalty by the representations of unscrupulous partisans and scurrilous prints filled with shameful insinuations against the Queen. But the loyalty of the nation had been too personal and real a sentiment to be perverted; the truthful character no less than the simple confiding manner of Victoria appealed to the mass of the people, as it did to those by whom she was immediately surrounded. The charm which wrought on the hearts of all was no false spell, but was well described by a writer whose somewhat cynical and critical disposition had succumbed to it. "It is, in fact, the remarkable union of *naïveté*, kindness, and native good-nature with propriety and dignity which makes her so admirable and so endearing to those about her as she certainly is. I have been repeatedly told that they are all warmly attached to her, but that all feel the impossibility of for a moment losing sight of the respect which they owe her. She never ceases to be a Queen, but is always the most charming, cheerful, obliging, unaffected Queen in the world." At the same time her position was one of increasing difficulty, if not of danger—danger to the simplicity and truthfulness which were her happy characteristics—danger also to that freshness of spirit which enables its possessor to enjoy, because it forbids satiety. A court, be it never so pure, is full of large or small anxieties and wearing responsibilities for the mistress of it, and especially if she be young and with a forthright conscientiousness of soul. Its round of observances too may be deadening, and with a sense of solitude amidst all the splendour, till the very amusements and festivities become formalized into somewhat dreary and heartless observances. The Queen herself has said, "A worse school for a young girl, or one more detrimental to all natural

feelings and affections, cannot well be imagined, than the position of a Queen at eighteen, without experience and without a husband to guide and support her. This the Queen can state from painful experience, and she thanks God that none of her dear daughters are exposed to such danger."

The prince, who had with manly modest independence only occasionally sent his royal cousin a souvenir of his travels, was not forgotten, but after her accession the Queen had not kept up her correspondence with him as she had done before it, and this she much regretted at a later time. He was, so to speak, a figure with the halo of sincere and loving interest around it, but at present seen through the mist of indefinite time and space. The sudden change from the secluded life at Kensington to the independence of her position as Queen Regnant at so early an age had, the Queen tells us, put all ideas of marriage out of her mind.

It was not greatly to be wondered at, and we may surmise that there existed that indefinable desire common to all youthful maidens whose choice is made, and who know that the response is waiting, before binding engagement or betrothal, to take a short flight of liberty without relinquishing the sweet sense that there will soon come a time when a word shall be spoken that will be a signal for voluntary return and happy self-bestowal. Moreover, the Queen had had reasons for deferring an engagement that must have meant early betrothal and marriage. Her clear common-sense was concerned in the perception that Prince Albert spoke English imperfectly, that he needed to learn more of the language and the ways of the country which would be the land of his adoption. Also, young as she herself was to marry, he was two or three months younger, and though he was for his age manly, accom-

plished, and with a serene self-possession that became him well, he yet was not old enough to be husband to a queen. But many months had passed, and the youth who had gone to complete his studies and to acquire more of princely knowledge, as well as to exercise princely virtues and strengthen princely character, had been earnestly devoting himself to these ends, and had become an able, self-reliant young man, far-seeing, and with clear views of life, and above all with the power of patience and a nobility above self-seeking. These qualities were inseparable from a manly independence, which required to be satisfied that so far as his relations to the Queen were concerned, his waiting would not be in vain. In the early part of 1838 the King of the Belgians had written to the Queen, and probably had then definitely referred to the subject of the proposed marriage. In March the king must have had some sanction from his niece to communicate with Prince Albert on the same subject, and this communication was made while the young princes were at Brussels before going on their Swiss tour. Prince Albert looked at the question from its most elevated and honourable point of view, and when told that his youth would make it necessary to postpone the marriage for a few years, he replied that he was ready to submit to that delay if he had some certain assurance to go upon; but if after waiting perhaps three years he should find that the Queen no longer desired the marriage, it would place him in a very ridiculous position, and would to a certain extent ruin all the prospects of his future life.

The king was greatly impressed with the character, attainments, and manners of the prince, who had already so manly an appearance that though he was not then nineteen he might have been taken for two or three and twenty.

The opinion expressed by the prince was endorsed by his father the Duke of Coburg, who pointed out that should he wait till he was twenty-two or twenty-three, he would be unable to begin any new career, and his whole life would be marred if the Queen should change her mind. Of this, however, the Queen herself has said she never entertained any idea, and she afterwards informed the prince that she would never have married anyone else, a declaration emphasized years afterwards by the admission that she could not even then think without indignation against herself of her wish to keep the prince waiting, at the risk of ruining all his prospects for life, until she might feel inclined to marry.

In the month of June, 1839, Ernest, the hereditary prince of Coburg, came of age, and Prince Albert had, by special act of the legislature, been declared to be of age at the same time. "Now," he wrote, "I am my own master, as I hope always to be, and under all circumstances." In July the majority of the princes had been celebrated at Coburg. Prince Albert and his brother had parted with mutual grief, for the latter had gone to pursue his military studies by taking service with the King of Saxony at Dresden, and Prince Albert had, as we have seen, been making a journey in Italy, where he had the advantage of being accompanied by Baron Stockmar, and, at Florence, by Lieutenant (afterwards Major-general) Seymour, who read English with him, and whose refinement of manners and character so well suited the prince that they became firm friends. The days spent in Italy were to good purpose, and the prince lived in his accustomed simple manner. Early rising, study from six to noon, a simple mid-day meal, a visit to some gallery of art or public building, a long walk or ride into the country, or two or three hours devoted to playing the organ in the church

of the Badia, where the passing monks would stay to listen to the music of the foreign prince, whose performance equalled that of their own organ-master—such were the usual occupations, with occasional attendance at a ball or some assembly, invitations to which could not be refused. When the pleasant working holiday was over the prince was about to settle down at Rosenau to complete his English studies, but his father called upon him to accompany him to Carlsbad. At the beginning of October we find him with his brother at Brussels, whence they were to pay another visit to England, the prince intending to tell the Queen that if she could not now make up her mind she must understand that he could no longer wait for a decision, as he had done at a former period when the marriage was first talked about. They brought with them a guarded letter from King Leopold, who recommended them to the "*bienveillance*" of his dearest Victoria, saying, "They are good, honest creatures, deserving your kindness, and not pedantic, but really sensible and trustworthy. I have told them that your great wish is that they should be quite at their ease with you. I am sure that if you have anything to recommend to them they will be most happy to learn it from you." The king probably had made a shrewd guess that matters would be brought to a happy crisis, though the prince went under the impression "that the Queen wished the marriage to be broken off, and that for four years she could think of no marriage." To this effect he had written to his old and intimate friend Prince von Löwenstein, and he perhaps had good reason for it in the representations made by King Leopold, as repeating those of the Queen herself; but a good many changes had taken place since the cousins had last met. The mutual distrust of political parties was increasing, and it was more and more difficult for

the sovereign to hold a position of neutrality. There were many reasons in favour of the young Queen having a suitable protector, with the right to be constantly near her. Other alliances had already been proposed, and might soon be pressed upon her attention. The change that had taken place in the young princes themselves was remarkable, and Albert's appearance was so striking for its manly beauty and for the expression of self-control, gentleness, and high intelligence, that doubts founded on his youth and inexperience were not likely to last.

On the 12th of October, the second day after their arrival, it was evident that whatever reasons the Queen may have had for demanding delay were destined to give way before the personal influence of the prince. "Albert's beauty is most striking, and he is most amiable and unaffected," her Majesty wrote to her uncle, "in short very *fascinating*. The young men are very amiable, delightful companions, and I am very happy to have them here." To this the king replied, "Albert is a very agreeable companion. His manners are so gentle and harmonious that one likes to have him near oneself. . . . May Albert be able to strew roses without thorns on the pathway of life of our good Victoria! He is well qualified to do so."

Before this letter reached her, however, "our good Victoria" had wisely acted according to her new impulse. Lord Melbourne, Lord Clanricarde, Lord and Lady Granville, Baron Brunnow, and Lord Normanby were staying at the castle, and the daily routine was for the princes to pay the Queen a visit in her own room after breakfast, and at two o'clock to take luncheon with her and the Duchess of Kent. In the afternoon nearly everybody went out riding, forming a large cavalcade; and every evening there was a great dinner, with a dance afterwards, on three evenings a week.

It is on record that Lord Melbourne had sometime previously spoken to the Queen on the subject of her probable marriage, but whether this was so or not, on the 14th of October her Majesty told him that she had made up her mind. Such an acute observer—and one too who watched with loving and guarding eyes—was probably not much surprised, and he certainly received the news with great satisfaction. "I think it will be very well received," he said, "for I hear that there is an anxiety now that it should be, and I am very glad of it;" adding in a paternal tone, "You will be much more comfortable, for a woman cannot stand alone for any time in whatever position she may be."

An intimation had next to be given to the prince, for royal etiquette debarred him from speaking; and Baron Alvensleben, the master of the horse to the Duke of Coburg, who had accompanied the prince to England, was charged with a message that the Queen wished to speak to him next day.

The prince, with his brother, was out early the next morning, for it was a hunting day; but he returned at noon, and half-an-hour afterwards obeyed the summons to the Queen's room, where she was alone. The first few words of the interview must have been the prelude to other words—spoken, perhaps, with hesitation, certainly with modest emotion, but as certainly without affectation. The Queen's frank, truthful nature, and the delicacy that belonged to her purely womanly character, would have made her lovely, even if she had not been already loved. It is, of course, chiefly from letters that we have any of these side-lights which show us what took place at this happy time. In one written to his beloved grandmother at Gotha the prince said: "The Queen declared to me, in a genuine outburst of love and affection, that I had gained her whole heart, and would

make her intensely happy if I would make her the sacrifice of sharing her life with her, for she said she looked on it as a sacrifice; the only thing which troubled her was that she did not think she was worthy of me. The joyous openness of manner in which she told me this quite enchanted me, and I was quite carried away by it."

That the prince received the sweet intimation as a lover should, with the warmest demonstration of kindness and affection, is known on the best authority. "How I will strive to make him feel as little as possible the great sacrifice he has made! I told him it *was* a great sacrifice on his part, but he would not allow it," the Queen wrote in her journal. "I then told him to fetch Ernest, which he did, who congratulated us both, and seemed very happy."

"I write to you," says the prince in a letter to Baron Stockmar, "on one of the happiest days of my life, to give you the most welcome news possible. Victoria is so good and kind to me that I am often at a loss to believe that such affection should be shown to me. I know the great interest you take in my happiness, and therefore pour out my heart to you. . . . More or more seriously I cannot write to you, for at this moment I am too bewildered.

"Das Auge sieht den Himmel offen
Es schwelgt das Herz in Seligkeit."[1]

To this dear old confidential friend of them both the Queen had already written: "I do feel so guilty, I know not how to begin my letter, but I think the news it will contain will be sufficient to ensure your forgiveness. Albert has completely

[1] "Heaven opens on the raptured eye,
And flooded is the heart with bliss."
—Schiller's *Song of the Bell.*

won my heart, and all was settled between us this morning. . . . I feel certain he will make me very happy. I wish I could say I feel as certain of *my* making him happy, but I shall do my best."

To her uncle Leopold the Queen had also written on the same day, telling of her happiness, speaking of the kindness and encouragement shown by Lord Melbourne, and saying that it had been thought better that the marriage should take place soon after the meeting of parliament, about the beginning of February. The letter concluded by saying: "I wish to keep the dear young gentlemen here till the end of next month. Ernest's sincere pleasure gives me great delight. He does so adore dearest Albert."

The king replied: "Nothing could have given me greater pleasure than your dear letter. I had, when I learnt your decision, almost the feeling of old Simeon, 'Now, lettest thou thy servant depart in peace.' . . . You say most amiably that you consider it a sacrifice on the part of Albert. This is true in many points, because his position will be a difficult one, but much, I may say *all*, will depend on your affection for him. If *you* love him, and are kind to him, he will easily bear the bothers of his position, and there is a steadiness, and at the same time a cheerfulness in his character which will facilitate this." It was afterwards determined that, instead of waiting to make the announcement first to parliament, the Queen should, after the departure of her cousins, assemble the privy-council, and make the announcement to them.

The princes were to leave Windsor on the 14th of November, and the intervening days were very happy; the young lovers talking over future arrangements, among which it was settled that Prince Albert should not take any title, but that he should

naturally have precedence of everyone else after the Queen. It was a brief but happy wooing, and there is a tone of joy in the young Queen's brief records of it—a pervading sense of the sweetness of mutual affection, of the heart-glow and comfort of belonging to somebody who is dearest.

A battalion of the Rifle Brigade was quartered at Windsor, under the command of General, afterwards Sir, George Brown, and so there was a review in the Home Park by the Queen, in her Windsor uniform, a jacket with deep tabs, a black silk neck-cloth covering the shapely neck, and a cap, with a big peak, almost concealing the fair hair; the prince cantering by her side in the green uniform of the Coburg troops, and taking care to wrap the dear little fiancée in her cape, the weather being stormy, wet, and cold.

They were delightful days—days to be remembered with tears in time of after sorrows, but yet with a blessed hope of reunion. There was much letter-writing and letter-reading, and from Stockmar comes a long epistle to the prince full of good advice, exacting reminders, and deep affection; letters from Coburg and from Gotha reminding the prince that he would have to leave his old home, his country, his relatives, his life of freedom and leisure, and devote himself to the onerous duties of a great position, and to the continuous effort to secure the confidence and promote the welfare of a people who for some time to come would regard him as a foreigner. But he had set his heart to the fulfilment of the duties that would fall to him, and he shared the opinion expressed by King Leopold: if the Queen loved him he could face all the difficulties of his position.

On the 14th of November the prince left Windsor for Coburg, where the rejoicings on the announcement of the coming marriage were most enthusiastic. The prince himself was

evidently happy in the love of the bride who awaited him, and he appeared mostly to be in the best of spirits; but he was necessarily subjected to many conflicting emotions.

"I think I shall be very happy, for Victoria possesses all the qualities which make a home happy," he wrote to his friend Löwenstein. To the Duchess of Kent, who had from the first taken the prince to her heart as a son, he wrote in reply to a letter from her: "What you say about my poor little bride sitting all alone in her room, silent and sad, has touched me to the heart. Oh that I might fly to her side and cheer her!" The duchess appears to have asked him to send her as a souvenir something that he had worn, and the prince says: "I send you the ring which you gave me at Kensington on Victoria's birthday in 1836. From that time it has never left my finger. Its very shape proclaims that it has been squeezed in the grasp of many a manly hand; but the name is Victoria's too, and I beg you to wear it in remembrance of her and of myself." And at a later date, during the excitement at Coburg, he also earnestly referred to the multitude of emotions which overwhelmed him: "Hope, love for dear Victoria, the pain of leaving home, the parting from very dear kindred, the entrance into a new circle of relations all meeting me with the utmost kindness, prospects the most brilliant, the dread of being unequal to my position, the demonstrations of so much attachment on the part of the loyal Coburgers, English enthusiasm on the tiptoe of expectation, the multiplicity of duties to be fulfilled, and, to crown all, so much laudation on every side, that I could sink to the earth for very shame." "Love letters" now travelled between London and Coburg, and had even anticipated his arrival at Coburg, for from Wiesbaden, when he was on the way home, he had written: "That I am the object of so much love and devotion often comes

over me as something I can hardly realize. My prevailing feeling is, What am I that such happiness should be mine? For excess of happiness it is for me to know that I am so dear to you." And again, from Coburg on the 7th of December: "I cannot even yet clearly picture to myself that I am to be indeed so happy as to be always near you, always your protector." From the elder brother, Ernest, the Queen had also received a charming manly letter, full of tender homage and of unstinted praise for the brother whom he held so dear, and to part from whom he felt would be a great grief.

The Queen had now to perform the trying duty of making a declaration of her intended marriage. On the 23d of November eighty members of the privy-council assembled in the "Bow-room" at Buckingham Palace. Precisely at two o'clock the Queen went in. "The room was full," she records in her journal; "but I hardly knew who was there. Lord Melbourne I saw looking kindly at me with tears in his eyes, but he was not near me. I then read my short declaration. I felt my hands shook, but I did not make one mistake. I felt most happy and thankful when it was over. Lord Lansdowne then rose, and in the name of the privy-council asked that this most gracious and most welcome communication might be printed! I then left the room. The Duke of Cambridge came into the small library where I was standing and wished me joy." The Queen wore a bracelet with the Prince's picture, and this she says "seemed to give me courage at the council."

If any doubts existed as to the manner in which the intelligence of the approaching marriage would be received by the country they were soon dissipated. The announcement was received with cordial congratulations on all sides, and with demonstrations of rejoicing, which showed that the people were animated by heart-

felt wishes for the happiness of their sovereign — sentiments which were not diminished by the reflection that we should now finally get rid of Hanover, where the king (the still detested Duke of Cumberland) was indulging in abusive comments on men and affairs in England.

The anxieties of the Queen, however, were not half over. On the 16th of January, 1840, she went to open parliament, and not only the House of Lords but the streets leading to it were crowded, while there was a revival of the enthusiastic welcome which her Majesty had been wont to receive. This augured well for the national interest in the intended marriage which was now to be announced to parliament; and the occasion was one which may well have moved the hearts of the people, as the sovereign, now only in her twenty-first year, went to say with modest mien, and with a thrill of emotion, but with no uncertain or inaudible voice, "Since you were last assembled I have declared my intention of allying myself in marriage with the Prince Albert of Saxe-Coburg and Gotha. I humbly implore that the divine blessing may prosper this union, and render it conducive to the interests of my people as well as to my own domestic happiness; and it will be to me a source of the most lively satisfaction to find the resolution I have taken approved by my parliament."

As Lord Melbourne had prognosticated, the marriage was popular because it was well understood to be "a love match," and not an alliance for merely dynastic or political reasons, and it soon became the subject of exuberant congratulation and sympathy; nor were there any other expressions than those of the expectation of domestic happiness and public advantage in the addresses that followed the royal speech in both houses of parliament.

Sir Robert Peel, as representing the opposition, claimed the right of joining most warmly in the congratulations offered to her Majesty, and his speech was remarkably felicitous. But there were still important matters to be debated, in relation to the prince who was to occupy so distinguished a position, and these were made unnecessarily painful to the Queen, not only because of opposition or contention, but in consequence of some inexcusable blundering.

In the declaration of the marriage made to the privy-council the statement that Prince Albert was a Protestant had been omitted, and this was taken hold of, in spite of the fact that the prince and all his house were well known to be Protestants. The prince pointed out in a letter to the Queen, that to the house of Saxony, Protestantism, in a measure, owed its existence; that there had not been a Catholic or Papistical princess introduced into the family since the appearance of Luther in 1521, and that the Elector Frederick the Wise was the very first Protestant that ever lived. That his future wife and queen, at all events, might know and judge for herself what his creed and religious principles were, the prince sent her the confession of faith which he had worked out for himself in 1835, and had then publicly avowed in the High Church at Coburg. The Duke of Wellington, as well as others, argued that the word "Protestant" should be inserted; and though it was represented that the addition was superfluous, and Brougham pointed out that though an English sovereign was not forbidden by law to marry a Catholic, such a marriage meant simply the forfeiture of the crown: the addition was made. The calumny then changed sides, following perhaps the malignant assertion of the Duke of Cumberland; and the prince was spoken of as a sectarian, as a freethinker, as a man destitute of religious

principles. All these suggestions died the death of lies that cannot bear the light.

When the settlement of the prince's annuity was brought to the vote of parliament, a proposal of £50,000 was met by an amendment from Mr. Hume that it should be reduced to £21,000; but this being negatived, Colonel Sibthorp, supported by Sir Robert Peel, several leaders of the opposition, and the economical Whigs, who had sided with some of the Radicals, proposed another amendment, making the amount £30,000, which was carried after considerable asperity of debate. Next came the question of the position the prince was to hold, with regard to his precedence as husband of the Queen. No provision existed in the constitution for the husband of a queen regnant, though the wife of a king stood next her husband in dignity; and instead of dealing with the exceptional circumstances at once, the ministry only introduced a bill for the naturalization of the prince, and this left the whole question of the prince's rank or position to be dealt with by letters-patent, a royal prerogative which enabled the Queen to give him precedence only in England.

Lord Torrington and Colonel (afterwards General) Grey had gone to Gotha to escort Prince Albert to England for the marriage, taking three of the Queen's carriages with them. On the 23d the prince was invested with the order of the Garter by command of the Queen, the duke, his father (himself a knight of the order), having been authorized to invest, assisted by Prince Leiningen. There were great festivities afterwards, and then came the farewells and the journey to England, whither Prince Albert was to be accompanied by the duke and Prince Ernest, attended by the ducal master of the horse and other noblemen and gentlemen, as well as by Lord Torrington, Colonel Grey, and

Mr. Seymour, a party of twelve occupying six travelling carriages, and followed by two *fourgons*. At Aix-la-Chapelle the prince heard of the proceedings in parliament. Stockmar, who had returned to England to assist in making some arrangements for the royal household, wrote to him explaining the effects of parties in England in relation to the vote on the annuity. The prince understood the conditions pretty well, and though he was provoked that there should have been contention, and what seemed like squabbling on the subject, which he thought made it personally degrading to him, he was not angry with any particular party, and only expressed regret that the diminution of the amount would leave him less to spend on the promotion of art and literature. He had begun to face the troubles and responsibilities of his position, and to face them with calmness and cool judgment. He wrote to the Queen that the news had had an unpleasant effect upon him when it reached him on his journey, and that people in parliament seemed to have made themselves unnecessarily disagreeable, but concluded with, "All I have to say is that while I possess your love they cannot make me unhappy."

He had been under the depressing doubt, whether the opposition in parliament and the calumnies directed against him were not indications of popular objection to the marriage, but the moment he arrived at Dover this doubt was dispelled. He and his party had been suffering considerably from a rough passage, but there was a great crowd of people at Dover, and with determined energy he shook off his malady and stood on the deck to respond to their genuine and hearty English welcome. These greetings attended him, and even increased in ardour during his journey, till, on the 8th of February, he reached Buckingham Palace, from Canterbury, where the party

had stayed on the previous night, and whence the prince had despatched a loving message to her Majesty, and sent on as avant-couriers his faithful valet Cart, and his favourite greyhound "Eôs," which had been with him in England in 1836, and had then become an attached retainer of the Queen.

The marriage of her Majesty Victoria, Queen of the United Kingdom of Great Britain and Ireland, to (Francis) Albert Augustus Charles Emmanuel, Prince of Coburg and Gotha, was to be solemnized on Monday, the 10th of February. It was half-past four in the afternoon of Saturday that the duke and the princes had arrived at Buckingham Palace, where they were received at the hall door by the Queen and the Duchess of Kent, attended by the whole household. At five, the lord chancellor administered the oaths of naturalization to the prince, and there was a state dinner in the evening. On the next day (Sunday) divine service was held in the palace by the Bishop of London, and there was an exchange of the wedding gifts. The prince had brought for his bride a beautiful sapphire and diamond brooch, and he received from her the star and badge of the Garter and the Garter itself set in diamonds. In the afternoon the prince went out to pay the usual formal visits to members of the royal family, and the crowds that filled all the approaches to the palace at once manifested by their acclamations that they at all events approved of his personal appearance.

In a very few days Stockmar, who had been anxiously observing events, was able to say, "The prince is liked. Those who are not carried away by party feelings like him greatly." The appreciation of his high and noble qualities grew rapidly, from the hour that he stood with calm and princely mien and thoughtful happy face before the altar, to place the wedding-ring upon the hand of her he loved. The general sorrow shown by

the people of Gotha on the departure of their young prince had manifested how deeply he was beloved by all around him there, and the grief of the grandmother who held him so dear was acute. Even on the morning of his wedding he remembered that a message from him at that time would give her comfort, and he wrote: "In less than three hours I shall stand before the altar with my dear bride! In these solemn moments I must once more ask your blessing, which I am well assured I shall receive, and which will be my safeguard and my future joy. I must end. God be my stay!"

The marriage was to take place at the Chapel Royal, St. James's Palace, at one o'clock, and at half-past twelve the Queen left Buckingham Palace, with her mother and the Duchess of Sutherland in the same carriage. Her Majesty wore a rich white satin dress trimmed with orange blossoms, with a wreath of orange blossoms, over which a beautiful veil of Honiton lace hung down on each shoulder, but did not conceal her face. She wore the collar of the Garter and a diamond necklace and ear-rings. The Queen on leaving her apartment went to her carriage leaning on the arm of the Earl of Uxbridge, the lord chamberlain, supported by the Duchess of Kent, and followed by a page of honour, and was preceded by the Earls of Belfort, Surrey, and Albemarle, Lord Torrington, and other officers of the household. There were seven carriages, that of the Queen coming last, and the preceding ones conveying gentlemen-ushers, equerries, and grooms-in-waiting, great officers of the household, bed-chamber women, maids of honour, and ladies-in-waiting. The cortége was attended by a full guard of honour, but the carriages were drawn by only two horses each, and without the usual rich caparisons used on state occasions. It moved slowly with its cavalry escort, and shortly before one

o'clock reached St. James's Palace. The Queen was conducted to her apartment behind the throne-room, the maids of honour and train-bearers being in attendance. The princely bridegroom, with his attendant train, had of course reached the palace some time before, attended by the suite from Saxe-Coburg, and accompanied by his father and brother. He wore the uniform of a British field-marshal, and had no other decoration than the collar and jewel of the Garter, with the star of the order and the Garter itself (the presents from the Queen) set in diamonds. The Duke of Saxe-Coburg-Gotha wore a dark-green uniform with red facings, high boots, and besides the collar and star of the order of the Garter, the star of his own order of Coburg. Prince Ernest was in light-blue cavalry uniform with silver ornaments, and carried a light helmet. He wore the grand cross of a foreign order. The lord-chamberlain and other great officers of the household, with Lord Torrington, who wore the grand cross of the order of Saxe-Coburg, had conducted Prince Albert and his suite from Buckingham Palace before the Queen left it; and on descending the grand staircase the prince was received with acclamations by the select few who stood behind the yeomen of the guard. Trumpets sounded, colours were lowered, and the escort presented arms as the prince entered his carriage with his father and brother, the attendants following in two other carriages, and a squadron of Life Guards accompanying them to St. James's Palace. The carriages were closed and the journey was a short one, so that only a few among the vast crowd which had assembled recognized the prince, or knew that the bridegroom was on his way to await the royal bride. The lord-chamberlain had then the prince at St. James's Palace, and returned to conduct her Majesty thither, amidst the vast multitude which had assembled in St.

James's Park, and in the vicinities of both palaces; while people were still thronging in great numbers towards Carlton Terrace and the foot of Constitution Hill that they might see the royal procession on the return from St. James's. But the crowd was orderly and good-humoured, and the police performed their duties with equal good temper and discretion, and though the crush was tremendous there were only some casualties of a somewhat ludicrous character, chiefly caused by the futile efforts of a few people to obtain a view of the procession by climbing the trees. The enthusiasm with which the Queen was received brought a smile and a look of grateful recognition to her face, which was paler than usual, and naturally wore a serious and somewhat anxious expression.

While her Majesty remained within her private apartment, the procession which was to accompany her to the chapel was marshalled in the throne-room, and the principal persons who were to compose the respective processions then assembled in the presence-chamber, that they might fall into their places, and pass in proper order through Queen Anne's drawing-room, and the guard or armoury room, into the vestibule, down the grand staircase, and along the colonnade to the chapel.

A fanfare of trumpets and a roll of drums, at twenty-five minutes past twelve, heralded the approach of the bridegroom, who, preceded by gentlemen of honour and heralds, supported by his father and brother, and attended by the officers of their suite, entered the chapel amidst great acclamations, which were chiefly directed to the prince himself, whose appearance elicited general admiration. His royal highness, bowing to the peers in acknowledgment of their salutations, was conducted to the chair provided for him. He walked up the aisle carrying a book in his right hand, and having reached the *haut pas*,

lowering, but as the royal bride left Buckingham Palace the sun shone out, the mist cleared, and amidst cheerful brightness and the continuous sounds of rejoicing the royal pair, with their attendants, reached Eton. The college welcome was expressed, not only by jubilant shouts, but by a great triumphal arch in form of a Grecian portico, bedecked with flags, illuminated at night with 5000 coloured lamps, and bearing on its pediment the royal arms and the legend "Gratulatio Victoriæ et Alberto." Eton scholars shouted themselves hoarse, the college and town were illuminated, and festivities were the order of the evening. At Windsor the bride and bridegroom were awaited by throngs of people, and the streets were decorated with flags, wreaths, and transparencies. At twenty minutes before seven the royal carriage and its escort arrived in the High Street. A flight of rockets had announced their approach, and by that time the town was brilliant with illuminations. The royal carriage slowly passed through the assembled crowds, and amidst overwhelming demonstrations of loyalty and rejoicing, and when the last acknowledgments of the Queen and the Prince were made, and the royal pair had entered the castle, the people of Windsor continued to celebrate the happy occasion, several dinners being given at the principal taverns and at private houses, and generous provision having been made for a good substantial meal for the poorer inhabitants.

On the 12th of February the Duchess of Kent, the Duke and the hereditary Prince of Coburg, and the whole court followed to Windsor. There were two days of festivity, with dancing in the evening; and on the 14th it was time to return to London to receive addresses from parliament and almost every public body in England, to pay state visits to the theatres, and to commence a series of receptions, assemblies, and enter-

tainments which were regarded as necessary celebrations of the royal marriage.

On the 19th the Queen held a levée, and was led in by the Prince, who then took the place on her Majesty's left hand which he always afterwards occupied at state ceremonials.

The great dinners, state balls, concerts, and receptions of royal and distinguished visitors continued, not only during the time immediately following the royal wedding festivities, but for successive seasons, and the round of splendid hospitality was in some quarters made the subject of bitter censure; the lavish expenditure for these entertainments being contrasted with the distress and want arising from depression of trade and the need of broader measures of political economy and popular representation. The country was agitated, the public mind excited, and the "extravagance and luxury of the court" was a text ready to the hand of the disaffected and the uninformed. It was thought that cries for "the cheap loaf," for the relief of factory hands, for the amelioration of the suffering poor, were to be emphasized by pointing to the magnificence of royal assemblies. When it was discovered that the cost incurred for these splendours was not sent in as a bill for parliament to pay, and that the Queen sacrificed much of the rest and peace which she would have desired—especially after she was engaged in maternal duties as well as the duties of state,—for the purpose of stimulating trade by a succession of state festivities, the adverse feeling subsided. It was known at last that the object of the Queen and the Prince was to encourage the spending of money on British productions, and this was particularly manifested on several occasions. One grand ball given at Covent Garden Theatre in May, 1842, for the relief of the Spitalfields weavers, was attended in state by the Queen and Prince Albert,

and the Queen had almost invariably set the example of wearing silk, satin, and other materials of British manufacture. A fortnight before the "Spitalfields" ball, however, there had been given at Buckingham Palace a *Bal Costumé* of such magnificence that it became historical as the most superb entertainment known in modern times.

The "Queen's Plantagenet Ball," as it came to be called, was organized by her Majesty and Prince Albert for the express purpose of helping trade in London, which was greatly depressed; and the large sums of money expended by those who were privileged to attend it must, at least, have had some effect in temporarily reviving some of the suffering industries.

Her Majesty was to represent Queen Philippa; and Prince Albert, Edward the Third; and the court was to appear in the court dress of that period. The preparations were on a great and sumptuous scale. Buckingham Palace had undergone some alterations, which were also great improvements. The library leading across the sculpture-gallery to the hall, the grand staircase of white marble, the lofty green drawing-room occupying the centre of the eastern front, opening on the upper story of the portico and decorated in green satin with gold, and mirrored panels; and the throne-room, with its richly emblazoned coved ceiling, its sculptured frieze of white marble, and its hangings of crimson satin, were furnished and redecorated in accordance with the period to be represented. A throne of purple velvet with crowns, shields, and arms wrought in gold stood in an alcove in the throne-room. A great richly adorned tent, formerly belonging to Tippoo Saib, was raised beneath the Corinthian portico adjoining the green drawing-room. The windows were removed, and the tent was lit by an "Indian sun" eight feet in diameter set round a chandelier.



In this tent refreshments were to be served, and it was appointed with exquisite art and taste.

The whole scheme of this great entertainment was wrought out with the utmost care to make it a magnificent historical picture—an event to be remembered, and everybody with any pretensions to rank and fashion, especially everybody having the remotest chance of an invitation, became enthusiastic. There was, of course, a rage for securing accurate Plantagenet costumes, which, however, gave way in the main to more easily attainable habiliments of various historical periods and nationalities, since only the members of the court were expected to appear in the style of the reign of Edward the Third.

It would be useless to repeat the rumours that kept the town in a lively commotion. Enormous sums were said to have been expended on individual dresses by many among the noble guests, of whom a great company had been invited. The members of great and ancient families of high title, as well as of ample wealth, prepared to do honour to the occasion, and many of the rich and costly dresses were adorned with diamonds and jewels of almost fabulous value.

The leading feature of the ball, and that which gave it a distinctively historical character, was the assemblage and meeting of the court of Edward III. and Philippa and that of Anne of Brittany, who was represented by the Duchess of Cambridge; and this, as well as the other proceedings, was admirably accomplished. Arriving by a separate entrance, the Duchess of Cambridge and her court of Brittany assembled in one of the lower rooms of the palace, while the Queen and Prince Albert with a brilliant and gorgeous entourage awaited them in the throne-room.

Her Majesty's costume, which was entirely composed of the

manufactures of Spitalfields, consisted of a surcoat of blue and gold brocade lined with miniver over a skirt with demi-train of *ponceau* velvet edged with fur. A mantle of gold and silver brocade lined with miniver was fastened with a jewelled band, which, traversing another band of jewels in gold tissue descending from the stomacher, gave the appearance of a great jewelled cross. Her Majesty's hair was taken up in the proper fashion of the period represented, and was surmounted by a light crown of gold, bearing but a single diamond of great size and brilliancy—said to be worth £10,000.

Prince Albert was attired in a robe of blue and gold brocade slashed with blue velvet, over which was a scarlet velvet cloak lined with ermine and trimmed with gold lace in a pattern of oak leaves and acorns, and edged with pearls. The band of his cloak, the collar of his robe, and the shoes worn with scarlet silk hose were richly studded with jewels; and his gold coronet was set with precious stones.

The immediate suite were in correct costumes of the period, the maids of honour wearing dresses and surcoats decorated with gold and silver trimmings, the bed-chamber women with quarterings of lions and fleurs-de-lys, the Duke of Buccleugh, master of the horse, as one of the first Knights of the Garter, the Countess of Rosslyn as the Countess of Salisbury.

At half-past ten, marshalled by heralds, the procession ascended the white marble staircase and by the green drawing-room to the throne-room. The suites of apartments were thrown open, and were ablaze with light.

Many of the noble guests must have looked as though they were the old family pictures, from which their costumes had been copied, come out from the frames; but they had less to do with the actual spectacle of the ball than those visitors

who were to take part in the series of brilliant state quadrilles that were to be the vivid episode of the occasion. There were quadrilles of various nationalities, French, German, Spanish, Italian, Greek, Scotch, Russian, a Waverley Quadrille led by Countess De la Warr, and a Crusaders Quadrille led by the Marchioness of Londonderry, who shone with brilliants even to her gloves and shoes. The great ceremony was the passing of the quadrilles before the Queen, who with the prince had headed the procession as it passed to the ball-room, where the general company was assembled. Taking their places on a *haut pas* under a canopy of amber satin they awaited each quadrille as it was danced in their presence. There were famous beauties, lovely dames, and fair maidens, knights and nobles of renown. The state quadrilles lasted for an hour, the Scottish sets taking the form of reels; and the court then returned to the throne-room to watch the Russian mazurkas; led by the Baroness Brunnow in a Cossack costume of Catherine II., a tunic of scarlet velvet over full loose trousers of white silk, gold-embroidered white satin boots, and a cap of scarlet velvet with heron's feathers. The scene in the throne-room during this dance was very striking and magnificent.

At one o'clock an ancient seneschal (Lord Liverpool, the lord high steward) conducted her Majesty to the dining-room, where supper was magnificently served at a long double table covered with grand and massy gold plate and beautifully decked with elegant services of china and glass. Opposite the centre of the cross tables, where the Queen sat, a splendid buffet rising almost to the lofty ceiling was covered with plate, which gleamed amidst a profusion of choice flowers. After supper her Majesty danced one quadrille with Prince George of Cambridge for a partner, and the Duke of Beaufort and the Duchess of Buccleugh

as their *vis-à-vis*. At a quarter to three the Queen retired from the ball-room, and an hour afterwards the brilliant assembly dispersed.

Though this "Plantagenet Ball" was held, as we have seen, at a later date than the royal marriage, to which our main narrative has been brought, it properly belongs to the present page, for it may be said to have been the most remarkable of that series of splendid entertainments which began after the return of the royal pair from Windsor to London.

In the meantime other important social and political events had happened, and the Queen had entered upon a new phase of life. The tender cares and solicitudes of maternity had added a fresh grace to her youth. The birth of a princess royal and of a prince who would be heir to the throne had given a sweet but solemn intensity to all other responsibilities.

END OF VOL. I.

QUEEN VICTORIA

HER LIFE AND JUBILEE.



OUR SOVEREIGN LADY

QUEEN VICTORIA:

HER LIFE AND JUBILEE.

BY

THOMAS ARCHER, F.R.H.S.
AUTHOR OF "FIFTY YEARS OF SOCIAL AND POLITICAL PROGRESS;
"THE WAR IN EGYPT AND THE SOUDAN," ETC.

ILLUSTRATED BY A SERIES OF HIGHLY-FINISHED ETCHINGS.

VOL. II.



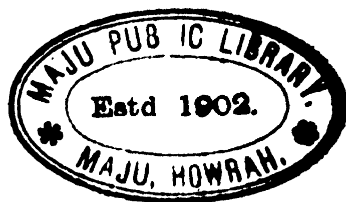
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"THIS position is a most peculiar and delicate one. Whilst a female sovereign has a great many disadvantages in comparison with a king, yet, if she is married, and her husband understands and does his duty, her position, on the other hand, has many compensating advantages, and in the long-run will be found even to be stronger than that of a male sovereign. But this requires that the husband should entirely sink his own individual existence in that of his wife—that he should aim at no power by himself or for himself—should shun all ostentation—assume no separate responsibility before the public, but make his position entirely a part of hers—fill up every gap which, as a woman, she would naturally leave in the exercise of her regal functions—continually and anxiously watch every part of the public business, in order to be able to advise and assist her at any moment in any of the multifarious and difficult questions or duties brought before her, sometimes international, sometimes political, or social, or personal. As the natural head of her family, superintendent

of her household, manager of her private affairs, sole confidential adviser in politics, and only assistant in her communications with the officers of the government, he is, besides the husband of the Queen, the tutor of the royal children, the private secretary of the sovereign, and her permanent minister."

This is the view which the Prince Consort held of the duties and responsibilities that he had undertaken. The words quoted were not written in this form till 1850, when they stood as part of an important letter to the Duke of Wellington, and were among the most prominent reasons for the refusal of the Prince to accept the office of commander-in-chief of the army; but these few sentences may be said to represent the scheme and purpose of his life in relation to the Queen and to the country, from the time that he first contemplated the obligations which his marriage would demand. He had set himself seriously to achieve a noble self-effacement, to attain to a truly princely character; and from the beginning he was prepared to give a subordinate place to some of those studies and attainments in which he delighted, and to devote himself to the less attractive subjects that demanded his earnest attention. Writing to Baron Stockmar when the marriage was first decided on he had said: "I have laid to heart your friendly and kind-hearted advice as to the true foundation on which my future happiness must rest, and it agrees entirely with the principles of action which I had already privately formed for myself. A character which shall win the respect, the love, and the confidence of the Queen and of the nation, must be the foundation of my position. This character gives security for the disposition which prompts the actions, and even should mistakes occur they will be more easily pardoned on account of that personal character; while even the most noble and beautiful undertakings fail to secure support

to a man who is not capable of inspiring that confidence." This resolution continued to be the mainspring of the Prince's endeavours, and enabled him to overcome difficulties which might have caused him to falter but for the high moral standard to which he strove to attain.

For a prince at twenty years of age—whose acquirements, though considerable, had been rather in the direction of general culture than of severe learning—to devote himself to studies for which he had shown little liking, that he might gain sound and adequate knowledge of the political conditions and constitution of a country where he had decided to aspire to no conspicuous responsible political position, was at least remarkable. An excellent musician, an artist of no small proficiency, and with a rare faculty of perception which afterwards enabled him to promote the useful application of science and the arts to everyday life, the Prince had previously shown no disposition to trouble himself with political matters. Important events of this kind had not induced him even to read the newspapers; and yet we find him only a short time after his marriage strenuously engaged in making himself thoroughly acquainted with the questions in which he would require to have an intelligent interest and the ability to discuss them with equal tact and judgment. But it was for maturity of judgment that the young Prince was distinguished, and this was associated with intellectual adroitness and that kind of mental activity which in some persons leads to a talent for repartee, and in his case frequently suggested the comic or humorous treatment of subjects which were not too grave for jesting, and a good-natured "taking off" of people's peculiarities which was never employed to hurt the feelings of anyone who came under his observation. There was a great deal of fun in the Prince—fun of the simple German sort—which in early

days occasionally took the form of harmless practical joking. This, however, was among his own circle; he was seldom able to overcome a certain reserve amidst a number of people at any large assembly. He was not a society prince in the sense of being able to join with *abandon* in the diversions of a large and fashionable party, and consequently he was sometimes suspected of being cold, formal, and indifferent, if not unapproachable; but this was only by people who did not know him well and had no opportunity of seeing him under circumstances when he was less restrained by the conventional routine of society. His natural manner was amiable and cheerful enough, and he was said to have possessed what may be called comic talents of a very rare degree, and to have a lively habit of changing from one subject of conversation to another with peculiar facility.

It may easily be understood that the estimate of the Prince's manner and accomplishments varied considerably; but it is certain that everyone who came frequently or familiarly within his influence regarded him with admiration and mostly with respectful affection. There was nothing base in him. With the largest toleration and pity for the weak and erring, he was a man of true purity of life and conduct. The simplicity of childhood remained in his moral nature, along with an acute perception and a habit of observation. His brother and all his early companions bore testimony to his single-mindedness, to his aversion to the vices which so frequently beset young men in the position in which he was placed; but just as there was no priggish and uncharitable pretension to exceptional virtue in his manners, there was no assumption of peculiar piety in his religion, which was a deep and abiding principle, inseparable from his daily life, and giving earnestness, breadth, and repose to his whole character. "Treu und Fest" was the motto of his house;

and with truth and firmness he entered on the high trust that he had undertaken; with truth and firmness he discharged duties that grew more and more arduous—too arduous sometimes for his strength, for, active as he was, the Prince had a weakness of constitution which even in early years caused him to appear pale and exhausted after unusual or protracted exertion. Stockmar attributed what appears to have been a lack of nerve power to want of attention to digestion, and probably the indifference of the Prince to eating and drinking, and a habit of getting meals over as soon as possible, may have had something to do with it; but at any rate he ceased to spare himself exertion when the responsibilities he had incurred demanded constant attention and often arduous work.

We have already seen that the Prince had to encounter difficulties and vexations at the very outset, but in accordance with the determination he had formed he gave them no personal significance. He quickly learned to estimate the effects of that free party strife which belongs to English political life, and to divest apparently adverse criticisms and temporary opposition of any personal bitterness of feeling; nor was his a temper and disposition that would be moved to anger, much less to animosity, by any merely selfish considerations. He was prepared, too, to make allowance for misunderstandings and even for misrepresentations; but the objections which he had anticipated would be made to him as "a foreigner," still speaking English with a slight German accent, and the aspersions on his character that were uttered by those who lived amidst detraction, were soon dispersed by the hearty welcome accorded to him as soon as the English people began to know and understand him and to appreciate the earnestness with which he was always ready to promote works of public utility and beneficence.

He was not, and did not assume to be, an orator, but his speeches were distinguished for remarkable condensation. Few men could in a few pregnant and telling words better indicate the subject and aim of what had to be said than the Prince, who seldom or never spoke at any length, and yet impressed his auditory with the significant common-sense that characterized his well-chosen comments. Of course after a few months he became more at ease both with the language in which he spoke and with the audiences he addressed, but he always had to speak under certain restraints, since the position that he occupied caused his words to be watched with unusual attention, and he had to avoid expressions that could be held to identify him with any party or section of the community. From the very first, however, he succeeded in being at once dignified, explicit, and impressive. Even the few words which he spoke on the 1st of June, 1840, at a meeting to promote the abolition of the slave-trade, showed something of these qualities: "I have been induced to preside at the meeting of this society from a conviction of its paramount importance to the great interests of humanity and justice. I deeply regret that the benevolent and persevering exertions of England to abolish that atrocious traffic in human beings (at once the desolation of Africa and the blackest stain upon civilized Europe) have not as yet led to any satisfactory conclusion. But I sincerely trust that this great country will not relax in its efforts until it has finally and for ever put an end to a state of things so repugnant to the spirit of Christianity and the best feelings of our nature. Let us, therefore, trust that Providence will prosper our exertions in so holy a cause, and that (under the auspices of the Queen and her government) we may at no distant period be rewarded by the accomplishment of the great and humane object for the promo-

tion of which we have this day met." This was the first time the Prince had spoken to a large English audience, and he was naturally nervous, knowing how eagerly and how critically his essay in what to him was still a foreign tongue would be listened to; the few words were therefore written and committed to memory, but they were his own, and they display his remarkable faculty of touching the predominant notes of a subject and presenting it completely and harmoniously to the common appreciation.

The attainments of the Prince in the arts of music and painting had already become known, and it was not long before he was requested to undertake duties which would enable him to use his influence in promoting their wider cultivation in this country. Only middle-aged people will now remember the "Antient Concerts," a series of performances given each year by a society formed for the purpose of maintaining a taste for what has been called "classical" music. The frequently large audiences which attended these concerts were rather fashionable than what is known as popular, but it soon became evident that the works of eminent composers were not altogether unknown to middle-class English people, or, at all events, that they would be appreciated by other than merely dilettante admirers. Prince Albert was requested to become a director of the "Antient Concerts," and as each director had in turn to arrange a concert, he took great pains to prepare a thoroughly representative performance, which, while it was in the best sense classical, was so inclusive as to recognize the value of the truly popular element in some of the works of the great masters. Perhaps no one who was not himself a practical musician as well as an accomplished judge of the art could have selected such a programme, in which Haydn, Pergolesi, Handel, Mozart,

Palestrina, Glück, Cherubini, Graun, Purcell, Arne, Beethoven, and Bach were represented by those compositions which seemed most effectually to display their peculiar qualities, while the inclusion of Lord Mornington's charming glee, "Here in cool grot," seemed to give a hint that England only needed a revival to resume her place as a musical nation, famous for that truly popular exposition of the art once expressed in glees, part-songs, and madrigals.

We have already noted how the recreations of the Queen and the Prince included drawing or sketching, playing or singing together. Music was, to both, a means of expressing deep sentiment; and the practice of sketching and painting was the outcome of an eye for and an honest appreciation of the beauties of external nature. With the Prince music was a delight. Seated at an organ which had been placed in one of the rooms at Windsor Castle, he forgot troubles and worries, and lost himself in serene and happy dreams, of which the instrument under his masterly hand became the exponent.

Lady Lyttelton, writing from Windsor on the 9th of October, 1840, said. "Yesterday evening, as I was sitting here comfortably after the drive, by candle-light reading M. Guizot, suddenly there arose from the room beneath, oh, such sounds! . . . It was Prince Albert, dear Prince Albert, playing on the organ; and with such master skill, as it appeared to me, modulating so learnedly, winding through every kind of bass and chord till he wound up into the most perfect cadence, and then off again, louder and then softer. No tune, and I am too distant to perceive the execution of small touches, so I only heard the harmony, but I never listened with much more pleasure to any music. I ventured at dinner to ask him what I had heard. 'Oh, my organ! A new possession of mine. I

am so fond of the organ. It is the first of instruments; the only instrument for expressing one's feelings.' (I thought, are they not good feelings that the organ expresses?) 'And it teaches to play; for on the organ a *mistake*—oh, such misery!' And he quite shuddered at the thought of the sostenuto discord."

The domestic life at Windsor suited the Prince better than the late hours and excitement of London, where levées, receptions, festivities, and public ceremonials were almost the only change from the study of important questions and the official business which belonged to his position. Coming, as he had, from a quiet, if not a secluded, life, in which he had few public duties and none of the cares of government, the strain upon his attention and even upon his strength was considerable, and he found the late hours to which the assemblies and entertainments were prolonged particularly trying, while his retiring disposition made it difficult for him to keep up what may be called a propitiatory demeanour to crowds of people, many individuals among whom it was necessary that he should remember and converse with. But his really amiable disposition, his calm conciliatory temper, and a desire not to appear to shrink from any duty however arduous—even the duty of participating in fashionable amusements—carried him through; and his personal attributes gained the admiration and good-will of people of various conditions and of all degrees of mental culture. At Windsor he could enjoy comparative retirement; the fine air suited him when he escaped from the smoky, heavy atmosphere of London, to which he never could grow completely accustomed. In London, however, he had contrived to make something of an earthly paradise in the beautiful park-like gardens at Buckingham Palace. His love for and knowledge of natural history came to his aid, and he "enlivened" the grounds with all sorts of animals and rare

aquatic birds. For landscape-gardening he had a genius which he may have inherited from his father, but which had certainly been developed by his contemplations of the pleasaunces of Thuringia, and it found scope at Windsor in making improvements in the beautiful pleasure-grounds around the castle, and laying out with plants, &c., a long green space below the terrace on the top of the hill where a number of old trees stood. The well-known "fishing temple" and the cottage of George the Fourth were to have been "improved off the face of the earth," but he had prevented this order from being carried out. Another pleasant occupation was that of forming a pretty little stud of all the Arab horses which had at different times been presented to the Queen. The Prince, like the Queen, was exceedingly fond of horses, and, indeed, of animals generally; and he was such an excellent equestrian that it was the cause of considerable amusement to her Majesty and himself to find this accomplishment very efficacious in gaining the respect and esteem of the gentlemen who were present on hunting days, when the Prince was among the best riders on the field.

His Royal Highness met with what might have been a very serious accident on the way to one of the first hunt meetings he attended, on the Easter after the royal marriage. A stag-hunt was to be held on Ascot Heath, whither the Queen was to follow with Prince Ernest in a pony carriage. As her Majesty stood at one of the windows at Windsor Castle she saw that Prince Albert was riding a skittish and excited if not a vicious horse, which went at a canter, and in spite of being turned round several times continued to bolt at the top of his speed towards the trees of the park. The Prince saw in front of him a tree with a projecting branch, and raised his arm to protect himself from too severe a collision against it, with the result that his

arm was much hurt and he lost his seat, falling rather heavily to the ground. The Queen, who saw only the beginning of the accident, was in great anxiety till she heard from one of the grooms that the Prince mounted a fresh horse and rode to the hunt. He met her on her arrival at the Heath and led her up to the large stand. He had been anxious lest she should have felt frightened on seeing the horse beyond control, but the injury he had received, though painful, was confined to a severe grazing of the arm and some bruises on the hip and knee. These and a torn and earth-stained coat were the worst results, but it was a narrow escape.

Among the memoranda relating to the domestic life at Windsor at this time is one which is touched with a serene solemnity. In one of the latest letters written from "dear old Coburg" by the Prince to her who was then awaiting his return to England to claim her as his bride, he had mentioned that in an hour he would be in the church at Coburg, where he was to take the sacrament, and with deep feeling he added: "God will not take it amiss if in that serious act, even at the altar, I think of you, for I will pray to him for you and for your soul's health, and he will not refuse us his blessing."

At Eastertide, 1840, they partook of the holy communion together for the first time, and we are allowed to know that the Prince had a very strong feeling about the solemnity of the act, and did not like to appear in company either the evening before or on the day on which he took the sacrament, he and the Queen almost always dining alone on those occasions. In recording one such quiet hallowed season, her Majesty says: "We two dined together. Albert likes being quite alone before he takes the sacrament; we played part of Mozart's Requiem, and then he read to me out of *Stunden den Andacht* (Hours

of Devotion) the article on 'Selbster-Kentniss' (Self-knowledge)."

A truer and more salutary domestic life was established both at Buckingham Palace and at Windsor after the royal marriage. A life, simple, but varied and cheerful. After breakfast, at nine o'clock the Queen and the Prince took a walk nearly every morning. Then came the usual amount of business—the examination of despatches, and the consideration of letters and communications on affairs of state,—which was, however, far less heavy at first than it afterwards became, when the Prince had fully entered upon the onerous duties committed to him. On mornings which were more free from business the Queen and Prince frequently gave their attention to drawing or etching, which was a source of great amusement, as they had the plates "bit" in the house. Luncheon followed at two o'clock; and in the afternoon Lord Melbourne, who was usually staying in the house, visited the Queen. Between five and six the Prince either drove with her Majesty in a pony phaeton, or rode while the Queen took a drive with the Duchess of Kent or with the ladies. On most days time was found for the Prince to read aloud to the Queen. Dinner was at eight o'clock, and always with the company staying at the palace. In the evening the Prince often played at double chess, a game of which he was very fond, and which he played extremely well. The Queen always disliked the bad custom of the gentlemen remaining in the dining-room long after the ladies had left it, and except when there was a dance—which in the earlier days was pretty frequently—the party broke up at about eleven o'clock. These early hours became more of a rule as the work increased, for the Prince had frequently to get through a good deal of business before breakfast in the morning, letters having to be written or

the drafts of memoranda to be prepared on important subjects in which he took an interest or which had to be submitted to the Queen. In the pictures which we are able to form of these domestic scenes, however, we are constantly attracted by the sense of serenity and repose which pervades some portion of each day—by the intellectual and elevating pursuits which are among the chosen recreations, and by the simplicity which finds pleasure of the deepest and purest kind because it has no need to seek for it in those excitements which are supposed to belong to a court. We see the Queen and the Prince, in all the freshness and charm of youth, making music and art as much a part of their daily life as the morning walk or the afternoon ride; we see them, as it were, hand in hand walking in a fairyland of their own, which is yet as much a part of the ordinary surroundings as are the familiar objects of the woods and grounds at Windsor or the gardens at Buckingham Palace, where the Queen stands watching the Prince as he crosses the little bridge spanning the water from the bank to the island and whistles to the flocks of waterfowl, who know the signal that calls them to be fed.

The serene life, however, was the result of a serene temper and a settled principle of conduct. There were troubles and difficulties, some of which were among the hardest to bear because they were related to matters of frequent, almost daily occurrence. We have already seen that the question of position or of precedence had become vexatious before the marriage, and it remained a source of much uneasiness to the Queen even when, by the exercise of her royal prerogative, the Prince took his place next to her at receptions and on public occasions. It has been already mentioned that in the bill for the naturalization of the Prince a clause had been introduced giving him

precedence for life next after her Majesty in parliament or elsewhere, as her Majesty might think proper; but this was opposed on the ground that it had not been set forth in the title of the bill, and the King of Hanover was protesting in violent and scandalous fashion against what he alleged was an affront and an endeavour to supersede the rights of members of the royal family. The Dukes of Sussex and Cambridge, who appear at first to have given a reluctant assent to the clause, renewed their opposition. Wellington was against it; and though the ministry were ready to make some alteration in the clause which would prevent its operating to give the Prince precedence of any future heir-apparent to the throne, there were so many symptoms of an opposition that would be derogatory to the Prince and dangerous to the government that, notwithstanding the strong desire of the Queen that the bill should pass, Stockmar earnestly advised Lord Melbourne to withdraw the clause and to substitute for it an order of council similar to that adopted by the Prince Regent in 1826 to settle the rank of Prince Leopold. This was done, and before Prince Albert arrived in England his position had been so far settled, not to the satisfaction of the royal dukes, but much to the satisfaction of the Duke of Wellington.

When the Queen went to prorogue parliament in August, 1840, the Prince occupied, as he did on subsequent occasions, the seat near the throne, and no interference was made with this decision, though it was understood that the Duke of Sussex and others, including, of course, the abusive and vehement Cumberland, still questioned his right to occupy that which was his natural place either in the House of Lords or in the state carriage which conveyed the Queen thither. The sentiment of the country was too decidedly in favour of the husband being

near the wife for any actual opposition to be attempted, and the matter ended in a protest from the Duke of Sussex, who spoke "as a matter of principle." "I told you it was quite right," said the Duke of Wellington to the Queen a few days afterwards. "Let the Queen put the Prince where she likes and settle it herself, that is the best way." This was in accordance with the duke's notions of royal prerogative, and it has been said that the great commander had little toleration for the traditions of court etiquette when they were opposed to the dictates of common-sense. Lord Albemarle, the master of the horse, was at one time very sensitive as to his right in that capacity to sit in the carriage of the sovereign on state occasions, and the Duke of Wellington was then appealed to. "The Queen," he said, "can make Lord Albemarle sit at the top of the coach, under the coach, behind the coach, or wherever else her Majesty pleases."

The duke's way out of the difficulty of the Prince's precedence was satisfactory enough as far as England was concerned, but it did not settle the whole question, as the Queen discovered, to her great annoyance, when she and the Prince afterwards travelled on the Continent. In a memorandum of a considerably later date (May, 1856) her Majesty wrote: "When I first married we had much difficulty on this subject, much bad feeling was shown, several members of the royal family showed bad grace in giving precedence to the Prince, and the late King of Hanover positively resisted doing so. . . . When the Queen was abroad the Prince's position was always a subject of negotiation and vexation: the position accorded to him the Queen had always to acknowledge as a grace and favour bestowed on her by the sovereigns whom she visited. While, in 1856, the Emperor of the French treated the Prince as a royal personage, his uncle declined to come to Paris because he

would not give precedence to the Prince; and on the Rhine, in 1845, the King of Prussia would not give the place to the Queen's husband which common civility required, because of the presence of an archduke, the third son of an uncle of the reigning Emperor of Austria, who would not give the *pas*, and whom the king would not offend. The only legal position in Europe, according to international law, which the husband of the Queen of England enjoyed was that of a younger brother of the Duke of Saxe-Coburg, and that merely because the English law did not know of him. This is derogatory to the dignity of the crown of England." It was not till the year 1857, a year after this memorandum was written, that Prince Albert received by letters patent the title of Prince Consort, which, however, had been always bestowed on him by the people of England, who had seen in his high character and unassuming nobility, qualities which were of greater dignity than rank or title can bestow.

The position of the Prince demanded from him the exercise of much discretion and forbearance. He had to watch every step that he took lest the adverse criticism to which he was exposed should accuse him of partisanship or of political bias. He had determined to act on a settled principle, the consistency of which should win his way to the appreciation of the country; but even though he could rely for support, not only on the affection, but on the clear practical judgment of the Queen, and though he was assisted at the outset by the sagacious advice and independent experience of Baron Stockmar, the course was a difficult one, requiring above all things patience and watchfulness.

Indifference to politics would now have been inexcusable, even if it had been possible; and the Prince, far from being indifferent, was deeply interested in the political controversies

and changes amidst which he found himself. There were few public men who could better estimate the probable results of those stirring events which soon occupied the attention of the government. He was a vigorous thinker, and had very decided opinions upon all matters of foreign and domestic policy, so that his keen interest in them might easily have led him to some active advocacy, which would have been no less than interference with the great questions that necessarily occupied his attention. "From the first, however, the Prince appreciated the extreme delicacy of his position, and laid down for himself the rule that no act of his should by possibility expose him to the imputation of interference with the machinery of the state, or of encroachment on the functions and privileges of the sovereign. At the same time he formed an equally clear view of his duty to qualify himself thoroughly for supporting the sovereign by his advice, and this involved the most assiduous attention to every subject, whether at home or abroad, in which the welfare of her kingdom was involved."[1]

It is not easy to estimate the difficulties with which, from the first, he had to contend in his endeavour to give practical evidence of his disinterested intention to act with the strictest impartiality, and yet to claim the right which, as the consort of the Queen, would enable him to act as her nearest adviser and helper.

When the treaty of his marriage with the Queen was settled by Baron Stockmar as his representative, arrangements were also made for his future household, for appointments in which there were soon a number of applicants. In a letter to her Majesty, as early as the 10th of December, 1839, he had mentioned distinctly what were the qualifications which he

[1] Sir Theodore Martin's *Life of the Prince Consort.*

thought should be kept in view in making those appointments. "I should wish particularly that the selection should be made without regard to politics, for if I am really to keep myself free from all parties my people must not belong exclusively to one side. Above all, these appointments should not be mere 'party rewards,' but they should possess some other recommendation besides that of political connection. Let the men be either of very high rank, or very accomplished, or very clever, or persons who have performed important services for England."

The Prince was much disappointed to find that a private secretary had already been provided for him, Mr. Anson, who had fulfilled the same office for Lord Melbourne, having been nominated. The Prince was justified in regarding this as a high-handed proceeding, calculated to place him at once in a false position towards the Tories, and to lead the public to imagine that he was committed to the Whig administration. Apart from this, the office of private secretary was one of all others for which he might expect to make his own choice, as the person holding it would necessarily be on terms of very close intimacy. "I am leaving my home with all its old associations, all my bosom friends, and going to a country in which everything is new and strange to me—men, language, customs, modes of life, position. Except yourself I have no one to confide in. And it is not even to be conceded to me that the two or three persons who are to have the charge of my private affairs shall be persons who already command my confidence." So he wrote to the Queen; but the appointment was made and he had to submit. Happily he found in Mr. Anson a servant who was a high-minded gentleman, independent of party, and devoted to the interests of the Prince, which were in truth the interests of the crown. The Prince, who knew a good man when he saw

him, soon learned to regard and esteem his secretary, for whom he entertained a sincere friendship, and whose death in 1849 was a great grief to him. The other permanent appointments in the household of the Prince were held by men who were unconnected with politics, with the exception of the groom of the stole and one lord in waiting, who were to be changed with each change of ministry.

But the royal household itself was so constituted, or rather so unorganized, that it required the exercise of all the patience at the command of the Prince to endure it. After a short time he began to make some effort to obtain authority as the head of the family, to reform abuses which had been going on for years, and possessed a vast tenacity of existence; but at first he found himself little more than a cipher amidst a number of vested interests. There was no head of the household to whom anybody could refer, and all that could be plainly discovered was that while confusion, waste, and extravagance went uncontrolled, there was an elaborate show of system—a number of officers, neither of whom was responsible for anything beyond his own immediate jurisdiction, the limits of which he jealously restricted by doing as little as possible until after a series of references.

All the important court appointments were mere ministerial arrangements, the real qualification for each office being only a secondary consideration. But supposing that the qualification had been in every case what it ought to have been, the permanency of any household system, and a uniform and efficient administration, were quite impossible. The great officers of state, who are always noblemen of high rank and political consideration, changed with every government. Since the year 1830 there had been five changes in the office of the lord-chamberlain, and six in that of the lord-steward.

None of the great officers could reside in the palace, and frequently they could not even reside in the same place with the court; so that any uninterrupted and effective personal superintendence of the daily details of their respective departments was made impracticable, and they were forced to delegate part of their authority to servants very inferior in rank in the royal household.

Instead of the whole building of the palace being under the charge of one department, it was placed under three departments; but it was quite undecided which parts of the palace were under the charge of the lord-chamberlain, and which under the lord-steward. In the time of George III. the lord-steward had the custody and charge of the whole palace, excepting the royal apartments, drawing-rooms, &c. &c. In George IV.'s and William IV.'s reign it was held that the whole of the ground-floor, including halls, dining-rooms, &c., were in his charge; but the lord-steward had surrendered to the lord-chamberlain the grand hall and the other rooms on the ground-floor. Whether the kitchen, sculleries, and pantries remained under his charge became a doubtful question. The outside of the palace was considered to belong to the Woods and Forests; so that as the inside cleaning of the windows belonged to the lord-chamberlain's department, the degree of light to be admitted into the palace depended proportionably on the well-timed and good understanding between the lord-chamberlain's office and that of the Woods and Forests.

The housekeepers, pages, housemaids, &c., were under the authority of the lord-chamberlain; all the footmen, livery-porters, and under-butlers, by the strangest anomaly, under that of the master of the horse, at whose office they were clothed and paid; and the rest of the servants, such as the clerk of the kitchen,

the cooks, the porters, &c., were under the jurisdiction of the lord-steward. These ludicrous divisions not only extended to persons, but to things and actions. The lord-steward, for example, found the fuel and laid the fire, and the lord-chamberlain lighted it. The answer to a message sent one day by her Majesty to Sir Frederick Watson, then master of the household, to complain that the drawing-room was always cold, was, "You see, properly speaking, it is not our fault; for the lord-steward lays the fire only, and the lord-chamberlain lights it." In the same manner the lord-chamberlain provided all the lamps, and the lord-steward cleaned, trimmed, and lighted them. If a pane of glass or the door of a cupboard in the scullery required mending it could not be done without a requisition being prepared and signed by the chief cook, countersigned by the clerk of the kitchen, taken to be signed by the master of the household, thence taken to the lord-chamberlain's office, where it was authorized, and then laid before the clerk of the works, under the office of Woods and Forests. Consequently many a window and cupboard remained broken for months. The authority of the officer called the master of the household was entirely unrecognized, and even the lord-steward's department was quite undefined. It depended altogether upon the chief officers, whom political changes placed over the master of the household, to what extent they would delegate their power to him, leaving the servants in the palace at a loss to know whether they were to regard his authority.

As neither the lord-chamberlain nor the master of the horse had a regular deputy residing in the palace, more than two-thirds of all the male and female servants were left without a master in the house. They could go on and go off duty as they chose, could remain absent for hours on their days of waiting,

or they might commit any excess or irregularity; there was nobody to observe, to correct, or to reprimand them. The various details of internal arrangement, whereon depends the well-being and comfort of the whole establishment, no one was cognisant of or responsible for. There was no officer responsible for the cleanliness, order, and security of the rooms and offices throughout; and if smoking, drinking, and other irregularities occurred in the dormitories, where footmen, &c., slept ten or twelve in each room, no one could help it.

There was no one who attended to the comfort of the Queen's guests on their arrival at the royal residence. When they arrived there was no one prepared to show them to or from their apartments, there was no gentleman in the palace who even knew where they were lodged. It frequently happened at Windsor that some of the visitors were at a loss to find the drawing-room; and at night, if they happened to forget the entrance from the corridors, they might wander about for an hour helpless and unassisted. There was nobody to apply to in such a case, for it was not in the department of the master of the household, and the only remedy was to send a servant, if one could be found, to the porter's lodge to ascertain the locality of the apartment in question.[1]

"In my home life I am very happy and contented; but the difficulty in filling my place with the proper dignity is, that I am only the husband and not the master in the house," wrote Prince Albert to his friend Prince von Löwenstein in May, 1840. Arrangements appear to have been made, or perpetuated, which would operate not only to exclude him from participating in public affairs, but from taking his natural place in his own household.

[1] Stockmar's Memorandum on the Royal Household.

The Baroness Lehzen, who, as the former governess of the Queen, had always been regarded by her Majesty with confidence and affection, and, as we have seen, with a little awe, had virtually become private secretary, and had fallen into the not unusual error of supposing that she would be able to maintain much of her former influence and authority even after the Queen's marriage. Of course the princely husband would be treated with the greatest respect, but it could not be expected that he would interfere in any way with the affairs of the household of which he was only a member. The young couple were to be managed for their own good, of course, but that the Prince should have any independent views of his own could not be tolerated. His was a difficult position, requiring some tact and patience, and it would seem that it might have lasted beyond all endurance but for the quiet diplomatic energy of Stockmar, who came to the rescue, and eventually, but not for a considerable time completely, the Prince was able to claim that authority in the domestic circle which in private families belongs to the husband, and without which there cannot be true comfort or happiness in domestic life. That he should occupy the position of confidential adviser and secretary to the Queen was natural and necessary, and the reorganization of the household followed on the adoption of a plan suggested by Stockmar, which retained the three chief court officials and their departments in their connection with the political system of the country, but delegated to one resident official or master of the household the authority to maintain order and discipline in matters presumed to belong to either department.

While awaiting these changes, the Prince, as we have seen, busied himself with the studies that were necessary to the duties that were to fall to him, and with the simple recreations which

best suited him. The Queen's birthday had been observed quietly at Claremont by a happy holiday. On the 26th of August, 1840, that of the Prince was celebrated at Windsor in pleasant domestic fashion by a family fête, but it was excusable if for a few moments a touch of sadness mingled with his satisfaction. There were those present for whom he had a deep and abiding affection: and though the Duchess of Kent had, two months after the royal marriage, taken up her abode at Frogmore, and when in London at Ingestre House, Belgrave Square, she, like other members of the royal family, could personally join in the general congratulations; but the recipient of them missed the familiar voices which used to greet him on former birthdays at the Rosenau, and he thought of the time of his childhood when he listened for his father's footstep that he might be taken to see the little presents that awaited him in the morning-room at the old palace. His brother Ernest, too, had left England even before the birthday of the Queen, and the parting of the two young men was a trial to both, and even to the Queen herself, who heard them say farewell in the German student fashion by singing the *Abschied*—the parting song—together, with manly deep emotion.

But duties were imperative, and the Prince took advantage of the retirement at Windsor to commence a course of reading on the laws and constitution of England with Mr. Selwyn, and at the same time he read with the Queen Hallam's *Constitutional History of England*, so that she became a participator even in the severer studies. On the 11th of September the Prince was made a member of the privy-council, and as what was called "the Eastern question," to which brief reference will presently be made, had at that time become the leading political topic, there were opportunities for the Prince to obtain some

knowledge of the course of diplomacy, especially as the Queen, acting on the advice of Lord Melbourne, communicated to him all the foreign despatches, so that he could follow the course of events and at the same time estimate the differences of opinion which existed even in the cabinet.

The Prince had already, on the 28th of August, received the freedom of the city of London at the Guildhall, and he attached much importance to the occasion, warmly expressing his thanks for the honour conferred on him in being made a citizen, and acknowledging that the distinction conferred on him marked the loyalty and affection entertained for the Queen.

Expressions of loyalty and devotion to her Majesty were at that time greatly emphasized, for there were expectations of the birth of an heir to the throne before the end of November, and only a few weeks had elapsed since the Queen had been threatened by a great danger, her escape from which had aroused the gratitude and enthusiasm of the country.

The manifestations of popular sentiment and personal loyalty which followed the accession of a young and amiable Queen included some very remarkable instances of craziness. As a matter of fact a good many men who possessed that sympathetic temperament which is easily stirred to a kind of subdued enthusiasm were sensible of a strangely romantic attachment to the youthful sovereign. In the letters of Mr. Charles Dickens, who was at that time reaching the height of his fame as a novelist, there are some humorously exaggerated, but at the same time very subtle and not altogether unreal references to his own experiences in this respect; and he was not singular in that feeling of tender admiration and loyalty. Unfortunately, however, some exceedingly disagreeable manifestations of actual craziness occurred, and more than once the Queen was in danger

from this cause during the year after her coronation. To say nothing of lunatic letters addressed to her Majesty, or of individuals who endeavoured to obtain an interview at Buckingham Palace to urge their suit, one of them actually contriving to gain admission to some of the royal apartments before he was discovered, there were fools or demented creatures who annoyed the Queen when she appeared in public. One such was seen in the chapel royal during the service; not only staring with all his might, but bowing and kissing his hand in a most ludicrous manner till he was removed by the attendants; another fellow, a commercial traveller, followed the Queen on horseback as she was taking an airing in Hyde Park, and failing in the attempt to get near to her Majesty kept crossing and recrossing before her, waving his hand and placing it on his breast. As he would not desist he was given into custody by Colonel Cavendish, who was in attendance as outrider, and for an assault on whom he was fined £5 and ordered to find bail for his good behaviour in a rather heavy amount.

On these and on another occasion, when a man threw into her carriage a letter, which struck her in the face, her Majesty never seemed to lose self-possession. This quality was still more severely tried when, on the 10th of June, 1840, a young fellow named Oxford, who had been a potboy at a public-house, fired two pistols at her as she drove with the Prince up Constitution Hill. It was about six o'clock in the evening when her Majesty and the Prince had left Buckingham Palace by the garden gate. They were in a low "droschky" drawn by four horses with postilions, preceded by two outriders, and followed by two equerries. The carriage had gone beyond the crowd of people standing at each side of the gate to see it pass when a young man, on the side of the road towards the Green Park,

deliberately presented a pistol and fired it at her Majesty. The Prince turned his head on hearing the report and at once prevented the Queen from rising in the carriage as she seemed inclined to do. The act was witnessed by one of the few spectators, but before anyone could interfere the scoundrel who perpetrated it drew a second pistol from a breast pocket with his left hand, and, looking to see that no one was behind him, fired a second time. Happily neither shot had taken effect. Several persons rushed upon the fellow, who was conveyed to a police-station, where he seemed indifferent, and preserved an unmoved but trivial demeanour. Her Majesty was of course greatly alarmed, but, except that she turned pale, betrayed little agitation. She ordered the postilions to drive to Ingestre House, for she was much concerned lest a report of the occurrence should reach the Duchess of Kent before an assurance of safety could be conveyed to her. We may easily imagine what were the feelings of the mother, with whom the Queen and the Prince remained for a short time before continuing their drive to return by Hyde Park. They did not return unescorted. A large concourse of people had assembled, and a number of ladies and gentlemen, riding in the park, accompanied the royal equipage amidst the warmest demonstrations of loyalty and hearty congratulation. For many days manifestations of equal loyalty and affection continued whenever her Majesty and the Prince appeared. People thronged to give expression to sentiments of regard in the shape of tumultuous cheering, and there were always ladies and gentlemen ready to form an escort, which was almost embarrassing. On the night of the attempt on the Queen's life the national anthem was sung with fervour in every theatre and at almost every public entertainment. Oxford was only seventeen years

of age, and at his subsequent trial it was argued that there had been no evidence of the pistols having been loaded with ball; that he committed the offence only from motives of vanity, in the expectation of achieving a certain kind of notoriety, which was gratified by his being tried for high treason; and that he was not only subject to delusions himself, but came of a family several members of which had been insane. He was acquitted of the alleged offence on this ground, and was sent to Bethlehem Hospital, where he betrayed no further tokens of lunacy than a certain "flightiness" of rather a childish character, accompanied by a peculiar self-conceit. The writer of these lines saw him in the asylum many years afterwards, and he was then engaged in painting and graining the rooms and doors of the hospital. He had become quite artistic in this employment, and appeared to be tolerably happy, but not with any particular symptoms of insanity. In fact, he was said to have remarked soon after his incarceration, when other attempts were made on the Queen's life, that if the government had hanged him there would have been no more shooting at the Queen. It was sought to show that Edward Oxford belonged to a secret society, and there was some evidence that he with a few other juvenile scamps had joined in an association which they called Young England. The O'Connellite journals made political reference to the attempt, which they attributed to an Orange plot to assassinate the Queen and to place Cumberland on the throne.

On the 12th (two days afterwards) Buckingham Palace was the scene of lively demonstrations of attachment to the Queen on the part of the most distinguished of the nobility and gentry as well as of high officials in every department of the public service. Addresses were presented by the sheriffs, cabinet ministers, and public bodies throughout the kingdom,

but the great event of the day was the presentation at a court held at the palace, of addresses from both Houses of Parliament. The speaker, who attended in his state carriage, was followed by above a hundred carriages conveying members of the House of Commons and by a procession of eighty-one carriages of the peers, barons coming first and others following, the higher in rank coming latest, ending with the royal dukes and the lord-chancellor, who came last. The spectacle was imposing, for many of the great nobles wore brilliant uniforms and decorations; and we may be sure that the Duke of Wellington was greeted with delighted acclamations by the crowd; while a large assembly of distinguished visitors, many of whom were also *en grand tenue*, occupied the grand terrace in front of the palace. On approaching the throne where the Queen received the address the procession was reversed, the royal dukes and the lord-chancellor being followed by the peers and the commoners. Prince Albert stood on the left and the great officers of state on the right of her Majesty. The address, which expressed heartfelt congratulations, was cordially received by her Majesty, who said, "I am deeply sensible of the mercy of Divine Providence, to whose continued protection I humbly commend myself, and I trust that under all trials I shall find the same consolation and support which I now derive from the loyal and affectionate attachment of my Parliament and my people."

The anxiety of the Prince lest the alarm to the Queen might in her condition have an injurious effect was shared by the public, and doubtless emphasized the enthusiasm with which her Majesty was greeted when she appeared in public. Happily no ill results followed, and the expectations of the birth of an heir to the throne were likely to be realized.

The approach of that event made it necessary that the

government should propose a bill to provide for a regency in case of the death of the Queen and the survival of her offspring. The Queen desired that the precedent of her uncle, Prince Leopold, and the Princess Charlotte should be followed, and that her husband should be named regent; but though the wish was natural and reasonable, the manner in which the proposals for the precedence of the Prince had been received in parliament did not hold out much encouragement, unless the ministry could be prevented from blundering and the leaders of the opposition could be propitiated or at all events brought to some understanding. This was easier than had been anticipated, and by the tact of Stockmar, who undertook to communicate with Peel, Wellington, and the political leaders of the opposition, an acceptable bill was prepared, though the Duke of Sussex strongly urged that the regency should be vested in a council, of which he, as well as the Prince Consort, should be a prominent member. The duke ("as a matter of conscience") entered his protest even when he found himself almost in a minority of one; but there was no contest. Both sides were agreed that Prince Albert should be regent to his own child or children as their natural guardian, and the country endorsed that conclusion, for though the Prince was not in the ordinary and superficial sense "popular," he had already begun to gain the confidence of the people. His singleness of character no less than his evident ability had already attracted the attention of sagacious observers, who foresaw the great advantage to the country of a Prince Consort who sought to promote social improvement and education, and to maintain the simplicity and domestic character of the royal household. The regency bill, introduced by the lord-chancellor, passed on the 13th of July, and the Prince could say with gratification, "not a single voice

was raised in opposition in either house, or in any one of the newspapers."

Lord Melbourne assured the Queen that this was due to the growing appreciation of the Prince's character: "Three months ago they would not have done it for him," he added; and this was true enough. Stockmar, who returned to Coburg directly after the passing of the bill, had found much less difficulty than he anticipated, for even the objection that in the event of the death of the Queen the sovereignty of the country would be practically in the hands of a foreigner, was held to be no serious obstacle, for it was argued that our history would show this to have been the case on several occasions.

Soon after the passing of the bill the court went to Windsor, and we have already noted the domestic life and occupations of the royal household during the autumn, when the Prince was engaged in the study of the constitution of the country and affairs of state, or as colonel of the 11th Hussars making himself proficient in military drill and command by going out with a squadron of the First Life Guards in Windsor Park.

Early in November it was thought desirable that the Queen should return to Buckingham Palace for her accouchement. Prince Albert wrote to Stockmar earnestly requesting that he would return to London, that as a tried friend and counsellor he might be near at hand at this time of anxiety. Stockmar himself was perhaps as deeply anxious as the Prince, for he could not banish from his memory the sad scene which he had witnessed at Claremont twenty-three years before. Even while he was at Coburg he had written concerning the selection of a nurse and the arrangements that were to be made; and now the court having returned to London on the 13th of November, he was there alert and quietly watchful, not, of course, as

physician or giving any personal attendance, but as watchful and trusted adviser.

With his habitual self-control and quiet attention the Prince prepared to take upon himself the duty of guarding the Queen from undue excitement. Stockmar had already urged upon him the necessity of perfect repose after the event, and he was himself sufficiently composed to superintend all the arrangements for securing it. Lady Lyttelton, writing to a friend, mentions a conversation which forcibly illustrates the sound sense and right-mindedness of the Prince. A nobleman, one of the chief officers of the household, asked if a prayer for the Queen's peculiar circumstances should be added (to the church services), the Prince replied: "No, no, you have one already in the litany —'all women labouring of child.'—You pray already five times for the Queen. It is too much." To which his lordship with what looks like pompous imbecility retorted, "Can we pray, sir, too much for her Majesty?" "Not too *heartily*, but too often," replied the Prince.

In the afternoon of the 21st of November (1840) the birth of a daughter was announced—the Princess Royal. The event had been known to be imminent, and the ministers of state and others assembled in the ante-room at Buckingham Palace were devoutly thankful to learn that her Majesty was in safety and as well as possible. The Duchess of Kent was with her daughter, as well as the medical attendants and Mrs. Lilley the nurse. Prince Albert, who was near at hand, was at first somewhat disappointed that the infant was not a son, but the feeling was only momentary; and when the babe was carried into the next room to be seen by the Duke of Sussex, the Archbishop of Canterbury, the Bishop of London, the lord-chancellor, Lords Melbourne, Palmerston, Russell, and other members of the privy-

council, the congratulations were most cordial. The warm satisfaction of the faithful Stockmar, who was then at the palace, took the form of a short letter to the Prince, in which he enjoined continued repose and the most careful attention for the Queen during the period of recovery.

Prince Albert gave effect to this advice by continuing the duty of watching over and regulating the arrangements for the Queen's comfort; and her Majesty has herself recorded his devoted tenderness and care, which were beyond all praise. He refused to go out to any amusements or entertainments, mostly dining alone with the Duchess of Kent till the Queen was able to join them, and he was always at hand to do anything in his power for her comfort. He was content to sit in her darkened room, to read to her or write for her. "No one but himself ever lifted her from her bed to her sofa, and he always helped to wheel her on her bed or sofa into the next room. For this purpose he would come instantly when sent for from any part of the house." Nor was his assiduous care ever wanting on successive occasions. "As years went on and he became overwhelmed with work (for his attentions were the same in all the Queen's subsequent confinements), this was often done at much inconvenience to himself; but he ever came with a sweet smile on his face. In short, his care of her was like that of a mother, nor could there be a kinder, wiser, or more judicious nurse."

The recovery of the Queen was rapid and uninterrupted, but the difficulties which would have been experienced in securing any true order and quietude or even ordinary security in that unorganized household may be illustrated by an occurrence which provoked much laughter and not a little consternation at the time. References to "the boy Jones" were constant, in the

streets, in social conversation, and especially in the coarser comic prints; and "the boy Jones" was one William Jones, a young scamp who had contrived to enter Buckingham Palace and had actually hidden under a sofa in the room next to the Queen's. He was discovered by Mrs. Lilley the nurse, and was of course immediately removed, but appeared to be unabashed, and declared that he had been in the palace for some time and could gain access whenever he pleased. It was supposed that he climbed the garden wall at some distance up Constitution Hill and secreted himself till he could enter by a window; but he did not make known the manner of his intrusion, and on his examination it could not be shown that he had any motive except that of impudent curiosity and delight in his achievement. The privy-council did not think there was much cause for alarm, and he was therefore sentenced to only three months' imprisonment as a rogue and vagabond; but the fact that a strange "vulgar boy" could obtain admission to the royal apartments unobserved was suggestive of the divided responsibility and the utter want of regularity among the servants of the palace.

The Queen's strength was so soon restored that the court went down to Windsor for the Christmas holidays, which were kept in the pleasant German fashion which recalled to the Prince the old familiar scene at Coburg. Christmas-trees were set up in the rooms of the Queen and the Prince. Mutual Christmas gifts lay as pleasant surprises on the tables beneath the green and glittering branches. Other trees with presents for the household adorned another room, and all went happily.[1] There were good reasons for rejoicing. Even the political atmosphere was more serene, and when the time came for the return to

[1] From this time the Christmas-tree, which in every German household marks the celebration of the great festival, began to be introduced in England, and added a new charm to the domestic pleasures of Christmastide.

Buckingham Palace the Queen dwelt with deep satisfaction on the simple pleasures and good-will of this holiday time at Windsor. The entry in her journal on the 22d of January, 1841, says: "I told Albert that formerly I was too happy to go to London, and wretched to leave it; and how, since the blessed hour of my marriage, and still more since the summer, I dislike and am unhappy to leave the country, and could be content and happy never to go to town. This pleased him. The solid pleasures of a peaceful, quiet, yet merry life in the country, with my inestimable husband and friend, my all in all, are far more durable than the amusements of London; though we don't dislike or despise these sometimes." This was doubtless written in the after-glow of the pleasant, cheerful Christmas-tide at Windsor, where all the circumstances—the first sweet, tender feelings of maternity, the delightful sense of true domestic life, the revival of strength and health, and the blossom of the marriage sentiment—contributed to the joyful observances of the season. As we have already seen, the return of the court to London was followed by a round of gaieties which did not betoken any deep dislike or contempt for London amusements; but there were other reasons for many of these court festivities besides mere personal gratification.

The baptism of the infant princess royal was to take place at Buckingham Palace on the 10th of February, the anniversary of the Queen's marriage; and on the previous day an accident occurred to Prince Albert which might have delayed it. He was exceedingly fond of skating, in which he was an adept, and had gone upon the ice of the sheet of water in Buckingham Palace garden, which was firmly frozen over, the cold being intense. Her Majesty was standing on the bank with one of her ladies watching the Prince, who made his way towards her,

when at a few yards from the bank he came upon a place where the ice had been recently broken and the water had frozen over again. Directly the Prince reached the spot he went plump into the water, and had to swim for two or three minutes in order to get out. The Queen was in a terrible fright, but did not lose her usual presence of mind, and while her companion could do nothing but scream for help—which was perhaps not an altogether useless thing to do—her Majesty promptly aided the Prince to get out of the water. The shock from the extreme cold was painful, and he took a rather severe cold; but he had escaped a really serious danger.

The sponsors for the princess royal, who was named Victoria Adelaide Mary Louisa, were the Duke of Saxe-Coburg and Gotha, the King of the Belgians, the Queen-dowager, the Duchess of Gloucester, the Duchess of Kent, and the Duke of Sussex. The Duke of Saxe-Coburg was unable to be present, and by special arrangement made by the Queen was represented by the Duke of Wellington, who had but just before supported the government policy on the eastern question in the House of Lords, and therefore was not only friendly but useful to Lord Melbourne's ministry.

"The christening went off very well," wrote Prince Albert to the Dowager-duchess of Gotha. "Your little great-grandchild behaved with great propriety, and like a Christian. She was awake, but did not cry at all, and seemed to crow with immense satisfaction at the lights and brilliant uniforms, for she is very intelligent and observing. The ceremony took place at half-past six P.M., and after it there was a dinner, and then we had some instrumental music. The health of the little one was drunk with great enthusiasm."

The remarkable behaviour of the royal infant was com-

mented on by Lord Melbourne, who on the following day said to the Queen, "How she looked about her, quite conscious that the stir was all about herself. This is the time the character is formed."

The court had settled down to the amusements of the season, parliament had been sitting for some weeks, and there were symptoms of a political crisis. "The boy Jones," released from his short imprisonment, was again, and, as it was understood, for a third time, lying in wait in Buckingham Palace, but was promptly seized by a police-constable and taken before a magistrate, who wisely induced the parents of the ingenious youth to let him go to sea on board one of her Majesty's ships, where he was probably a very active member of the crew, and may have made a reputation by imaginative narratives of the domestic life of the royal family.

Early in 1841 Stockmar had returned to Coburg, and though he continued to write to Prince Albert letters of considerable length and full of serious advice, which anybody but a thoroughly sensible and truly amiable prince might have regarded as being a trifle magisterial, he had seen that the husband of the Queen had already acquired a definite regard in the estimation of the English people, and that he was trusted and respected by representatives of both political parties in the state.

These results of the consistent character of the Prince were the more important because the Queen would soon be obliged to rely more on his advice and assistance. The Whig administration had for some time shown signs of weakness which betokened approaching dissolution, and Lord Melbourne, who was quite aware that his ministry was tottering to its fall, seemed little to regret the loss of place and power, except that he would be no longer the daily visitor and counsellor of the Queen, who

from the first days of her reign had been accustomed to apply to him for instruction.

It must be remembered that a great deal had happened during the comparatively short time since her Majesty's accession, and that the acts of the legislature had marked a rapid expansion of national life and sentiment. Important measures for the amelioration of the condition of the people and the abolition of abuses passed without violent opposition. Among these a series of bills, brought in by Lord John Russell in the early part of the session of 1837, introduced further alterations in the criminal code, by which the number of crimes punishable by death were reduced to seven, and a longer interval was to elapse between the sentence and the execution of a criminal. Previously the sheriff had been obliged to carry out the capital sentence within three days, and as no prisoner tried for felony was permitted to be defended by counsel it is easy to see that the weight of evidence might often be made to turn terribly against the accused. A bill was framed to put an end to this glaring injustice and to provide that the prisoner should be properly defended. Capital punishment was restricted to high treason and with some exceptions to crimes of violence or tending to endanger life. It was not till 1861 that the Criminal Laws Consolidation Act confined the penalty of death to the crimes of high treason and wilful murder.

The operation of the "new poor-laws," that is, of the act for the relief of the poor, which was one of the earlier measures introduced by the Whigs in the reformed parliament, was still the cause of considerable murmuring, and though the period during which it was to be tried had shown that it was on the whole a beneficial measure, necessary for removing the almost unmitigated evils of the old perverted system of what is now

known as "out-door relief," distributed with little discretion or inquiry, there were doubtless many hardships inflicted by the narrow restrictions, the mechanical and unfeeling routine, and the repelling policy of the new "boards." We need not dwell on this except to refer to the popular dislike and detestation of a system where instances of extreme hardship were not difficult to discover during its first hard-and-fast working, and from which such instances will perhaps never be absent. In songs, parodies, and caricatures, no less than in serious essays, bitterly satirical letters, and fervid denunciations, the new poor-laws were assailed by people who did not stay to estimate the evils which these laws were designed to remedy. A reference to *Oliver Twist*, the story which Mr. Charles Dickens published at that time, will show what was the prevailing feeling among many persons who, though they must have known that the foundation of the measure was in itself wise, valuable, and likely to be permanent, yet shrank with horror from the cruelties which were possible for brutal and unscrupulous officials to inflict under its provisions. In 1841, however, those provisions had undergone several revisions and modifications as the result of inquiries into some atrocious doings to which *Oliver Twist* no doubt pointed, and further amendments were claiming public attention.

It will easily be seen that the cruelties in workhouses, and the neglect, starvation, and ill-treatment of the poor who entered them from want of employment or through the misery and starvation that followed depression of trade, had a very definite relation to the subjects of trades-unions and the demands for political and social changes suggested by popular leaders, many of whom were ignorant, some of whom were dishonest, while others were carried away by that kind of sympathy for distress

and wretchedness which finds expression in violent declamation and the incitement of large audiences to take the laws into their own hands and break them.

So little do we hear of "Chartism" now that very few people would be able off-hand to say what were the famous "six points of the charter" for which constant agitation was maintained in London and the chief manufacturing towns. Those points were manhood suffrage, equal electoral districts, vote by ballot, annual parliaments, the payment of members, and the abolition of the property qualification for admission to a seat in the legislature. These do not now seem very formidable, for those that are worth anything have been virtually adopted; but it must be remembered that in the early years of the Queen's reign they appeared to be a long way off, and it was not unnatural that numbers of men should be led to believe that a more direct influence in the government of the country by the election to parliament of actual representatives of the needs and wishes of the people would be a remedy for the depression in commerce and manufactures, by promoting such legislation as would provide work and wages, and relieve the distress of the vast number of starving and destitute operatives and labourers, who were ready to listen to the inflammatory speeches of men who were eloquent and earnest, and whose denunciations were easily interpreted into exhortations to resort to physical force and to assemble in armed bodies.

"Chartism" (so called) was not altogether to be blamed for the violence exhibited in its name. Many of those who joined its ranks had been concerned in the deplorable offences which were committed to enforce the demands of the trades-unions. Factory operatives who had been engaged in threatening demonstrations against employers, in destroying mills and

machinery and firing buildings, and in half-murdering fellow-workmen who refused to be bound by the rules and orders of the societies, were not likely to be among the advocates of moral as opposed to physical force. Yet there were numbers of Chartists who were entirely opposed to armed demonstrations or to threats which were likely to increase distress by diminishing the security of industrial and commercial enterprise. For a time, however, the turbulent leaders had it their own way, and the sufferings of their hungry followers greatly augmented the mischief which at one time seemed to be spreading into insurrection. In 1839 a Chartist petition, said to have been signed by 1,200,000 persons and accepted at five hundred public meetings, had been presented to the House of Commons by Mr. Attwood, the member for Birmingham, and he proposed the appointment of a committee to consider the grievances set forth by the petitioners. His proposal was refused by a large majority in a rather thin house. This was on the 12th of July, and about a week previously there had been some Chartist rioting in Birmingham. On the 15th, Birmingham was in the hands of an insurgent mob, who sacked the shops, set houses on fire in various parts of the town, and destroyed property to the value of about £50,000. In this case it was necessary to call out a military force to suppress the riot, as in the previous disturbance the police, some of whom had been sent from London, were very badly injured. It was thought by some persons in authority that the very violence of the excesses committed by the Birmingham rioters, with the suppression of the insurgents and the arrest of the ringleaders, would put an end to Chartism: but there was not nearly an end even to the demonstrations of physical force. In the manufacturing districts the disturbances continued and increased. The advocates of violence professed

that they were misunderstood when the moral-force Chartists remonstrated with them; but there could be little mistake as to the probable effect of their addresses upon those who listened to them. The eloquent and stirring harangues of Mr. J. R. Stephens, a minister of one of the Wesleyan Methodist bodies, for instance, if they were not intended to incite to violence, could scarcely be otherwise interpreted; and Mr. Stephens, in the midst of his genuine earnestness and excitement, might have become as insane as another leader, Mr. Feargus O'Connor, a man of a very different type, if he had not been arrested and kept out of harm's way.

It was significant that the name "National Convention" was adopted by the Chartists. A giant petition, which had to be conveyed like an enormous roll of carpet into the House of Commons, was called the "National Petition;" and there were men among the leaders, and especially the "moral-force" leaders of Chartism, who, by their abilities and consistency no less than by their power in impressing large audiences, were likely to sustain the movement. Among these were Henry Vincent, who delivered stirring lectures and addresses on political subjects. Amidst the heat and fury of the time it was probably difficult even for the more self-controlled speakers to avoid seditious utterances, and Vincent, who was on a lecturing tour at Newport, in Monmouthshire, was arrested and imprisoned. There were three men in Newport who were leaders in the Chartist "cause"—Frost, Williams, and Jones. John Frost was a well-to-do tradesman, and had been a magistrate in the borough, but had been removed from office because of his intemperate language in addressing a public meeting. From that time his political inclinations led him to support the more violent party of the Chartists, and the imprisonment of

Vincent gave him an opportunity to assert the principle of physical force. With above 5000 men he marched into Newport with the avowed object of rescuing the famous Chartist lecturer. He and his followers, with the two subordinate leaders, Williams and Jones, went at once to the hotel where the magistrates were sitting; but intelligence of his movements had reached the local authorities, and thirty soldiers and several special constables were in the building. The insurgents, who consisted mostly of "hill-men" and men from Pontypool, were not among those who were in great distress, and they appeared to be of a steady serious class. They had sacked the villages through which they went, and compelled the able-bodied men to join them till they were 20,000 strong. Though not more than a third of the number went into Newport the rest remained in the surrounding hills. Many were armed with guns and pistols, the others carried swords, picks, and crowbars. On arriving at the hotel they began, by the direction of Frost, to demolish the building, as they could not gain an entrance. When the window of the room was opened by the officer in command they fired upon the small party of soldiers who were there. The mayor, endeavouring to remonstrate with the rioters before a shot was discharged from within, was severely wounded. The few soldiers commencing a steady fire their assailants almost immediately took to flight, several having been wounded and some killed. Frost was apprehended next day and Williams and Jones soon afterwards, but though on their trial they were convicted of high treason the sentiment attending the expected marriage of the young Queen may be believed to have influenced the jury to give a recommendation to mercy. The evidence showed that the attack on Newport was part of a plan devised by Frost for communicating with Birmingham for the purpose of another rising there and an

extension of the insurrection through the towns of the north. The prisoners were sentenced to death, but the judges commuted the sentence to transportation for life on the ground that the list of witnesses had not been delivered to the prisoners according to the statute. The Mayor of Newport was knighted for his consistent courage; and the suppression of the riot was, of course, a blow to Chartism, but it was not a fatal blow. There continued to be risings and seditious meetings in various parts of the country, but the government, unwilling to resort to severer measures than were necessary, contrived to disperse or to suppress them with the aid of the constabulary. Chartism itself was not put down. The moral-force advocates and their followers were as strong as ever. A great many of the other leaders were imprisoned for various terms, including Vincent and Stephens, and though the terms were not prolonged the treatment to which the prisoners were subjected was rigorous, especially in the case of Vincent, who, however, with his colleagues Lovett and Collins, had very favourably impressed everybody by the skill and judgment with which they conducted their own defence.

Carlyle wrote, "We are aware that according to the newspapers Chartism is extinct, that a reform ministry has put down 'the Chimera of Chartism' in the most felicitous effectual manner . . . it is indeed the chimera of Chartism, not the reality that has been put down. The matter of Chartism is weighty, deep-rooted, far-extending, did not begin yesterday, will by no means cease this day or to-morrow. . . . The essence continuing, new and ever new embodiments, chimeras madder or less mad have to continue. The melancholy fact remains, that this thing, known at present by the name of Chartism, does exist, has existed, and is like to exist till quite other methods have been tried with it." The truth was that amidst the labouring popu-

lation hunger, want, and the discontent that belongs to dire poverty took the aspect of political agitation, and what was needed was rather economical than strictly political reforms. The wide-spread and peacefully conducted agitation of the league for the repeal of the corn-laws and the removal of taxes from food, soon began to tell upon the wilder and less effectual efforts of Chartism. The violent Chartists found this out and tried to compel the Corn-law Leaguers to make common cause with them, broke into their meetings or occupied the places where they were to assemble. The violent protectionists opposed to the repeal of the corn-laws took advantage of this to provide bogus leaders or speakers to get up sham Chartist meetings, that they might prejudice or prevent meetings that were to be addressed by anti-corn-law agitators. Ebenezer Elliott, the famous "Corn-law Rhymer," who had done so much for true freedom and the well-being of his fellows by waging perpetual war against the war taxes and the imports on food that starved and killed the poor, wrote: "Plundered fellow-townsmen of Sheffield! Potato-fed men having no surplus are necessarily slaves, and the bread-tax-ry mean to bring you down to potato wages. You will soon then, I venture to hope, see the folly of allowing yourselves to be led the wrong way by paid agents of the scoundrel bread-tax-ry, who, favoured by your deplorable ignorance, have contrived to place themselves at the head of the Chartists, not merely to defeat the other wise and holy movement, but by so doing to sustain the all-beggaring food monopoly, and make the Liberal cause itself hateful and ridiculous."

The repeal of the corn-laws and the removal of taxes on food may be said to have been potent in snuffing out Chartism, but it was not till after a long struggle that the work of the Anti-Corn-law League was effected by the conversion of Sir Robert

Peel to their principles; and many other advances had been made which, by ameliorating the condition of the working population, extending the means of communication between distant centres, and promoting the knowledge of those arts and sciences which are applied to manufactures and tend to increase and to stimulate trade, effected an enormous improvement in the country. Frost, Williams, and Jones did not remain in penal servitude for life. An amnesty was granted to them in May, 1856, and on their return to England they found that vast changes had taken place. There was no longer any power in Chartism. It was only an historical term. Even the agricultural labourer had profited by the removal of the taxes on corn; wages had risen almost everywhere; and not only food, but clothing and other necessaries were so much cheaper that the purchasing power of the wages of the lowest labourer had greatly increased.

The "twopenny postman" and the "franked" letter are terms which seem to belong to some remote period of history, and yet it was only a month before the Queen's marriage that the old, costly, and obstructive post-office system was abandoned and the institution of the "penny post" was practically commenced.

The scheme, which was successfully introduced by Mr. Rowland Hill, was the outcome of careful calculations which proved that letters could be profitably carried to any part of the United Kingdom at the uniform rate of a penny for each letter weighing no more than half an ounce. At intervals for about a hundred and fifty years propositions for a reduction of the cost of conveyance of letters by the post-office had been mooted, and even a penny postage had been mentioned more than once, but the authorities strenuously opposed reductions on the ground

that the revenues of the post-office were already so low as to be unremunerative. This was probably true, as even people who were able to read and write were reluctant to pay the heavy charges for postage to distant places only reached by the coaches once or twice a week, or even less frequently, and the item of postage for letters was so considerable that ordinary trade letters were comparatively few. For twenty years, from 1815 to 1835, though the population had increased thirty per cent, and the advance of education had greatly augmented the number of persons able to write, the number of letters passing through the post-office had remained about the same. There were, of course, several small organizations for smuggling letters by means of carriers and private conveyances, and various contrivances were used by people who were anxious to send a short message or sign to their friends to say that they were still alive and in the same place. The single sheet to which an ordinarily paid letter was restricted, was frequently filled with messages to several persons in the same district, and the receiver cut it up and distributed it, or the one letter was read aloud to select audiences in the town or village. Sometimes the words in a newspaper would be marked or dotted to form a communication, or a blank sheet of paper merely directed on the outside and despatched unpaid would be a sign of continued well-being to the distant receiver, who could then return to the postman the unopened letter on the ground of poverty and inability to pay for its delivery.

Within a very limited area around Charing Cross, town letters were delivered for twopence, but the rates of postage to the provinces were so large that the computed average for the United Kingdom amounted to above sixpence for each letter, an amount which accounted for the survival of the old privilege by

which peers, cabinet councillors, and members of parliament could "frank" letters, or cause them to be carried free, by writing their names on the outside or address portion of the sheet. That such a practice should have survived till 1840 is very remarkable, and that many people should have continued the humiliating practice of waiting on noblemen and members of parliament to beg for "franks" was in itself a strong argument for postal reform.

Apart from the incalculable advantages to trade and commerce afforded by the penny postage system, it is impossible to overestimate its effects in quickening the social sentiments and giving new strength to family ties and domestic affections. Among friends long parted, relatives divided by insuperable distance, boys and girls away in service, fathers of families at work in the provinces or travelling on business, to say nothing of husbands and wives, or lovers, waiting for the letters that had become rarities because they were charged for as luxuries—a new and delightful experience commenced. Cheap postage at once stimulated the art and the practice of correspondence and became a motive power in the education of the country. There was something significant in the fact that this should have taken place at a time when the young Queen and the Prince to whom she was betrothed were keenly sensible of the sadness of separation, and it may be believed that they both hailed with satisfaction the adoption by the legislature of the system which had been recommended in the budget of 1839 and was put in force in January, 1840. Among the collections of persons curious in such matters may still be seen envelopes engraved with a highly artistic design by Mr. Mulready, R.A., which were the first issued by the post-office and used under the new system; but these were soon discontinued, and in May the plan

of affixing stamps for prepayment of the postal charges was adopted, on the proposal of Mr. Rowland Hill, to whom it had been suggested by Mr. Charles Knight, the well-known author and publisher.

The adoption of penny postage and the rapid increase of letters demanded a complete reorganization of the system of conveyance and delivery. The great improvement of the roads of the kingdom and the more rapid journeys made by well-built and well-horsed mail-coaches provided for the new demand. The long line of fine coaches drawn up every evening before the chief post-office in St. Martin's-le-Grand, and destined to carry the mails to distant post-towns, was one of the sights of London; but even then there were unmistakable signs of still more momentous achievements. In 1837 electric telegraphy was already suggested by the experiments and patents of Messrs. Wheatstone and Cook; but the more important enterprise was that by which, not letters only, but passengers could be carried at very low fares and in an incrediby short time to every part of the kingdom.

In 1838 the London and Birmingham and the Liverpool and Preston Railways had been completed—that between Liverpool and Birmingham had been at work since 1837, and active preparations were being made for laying down lines for "the iron horse" between all the great centres of industry. Steam-ships were already voyaging on river and sea; and experiments had been concluded for providing "ships of an enormous size, furnished with steam-power equal to the force of 400 horses and upwards to make the voyage across the Atlantic." It may be mentioned that steam-vessels were first used in war at the bombardment of St. Jean d'Acre in November, 1840, when some small "steamers" were present as adjuncts to the allied fleet.

The mention of St. Jean d'Acre leads to a reference to the Eastern question, which for some time gave the Queen much uneasiness, because of the angry and somewhat threatening attitude assumed by the ministry of Louis Philippe. The French government had always assumed that it should have a preponderating influence in the affairs of Egypt, and when the pasha, Mehemet Ali, revolted from the authority of the Sultan of Turkey, and after taking possession of nearly the whole of Syria was joined by the Turkish admiral, who took over with him the sultan's fleet, the French government of the time could not agree with the conclusions of the English, Austrian, Prussian, and Russian governments, and, jealous especially of English interests at Constantinople and Cairo, did not join the alliance. The sultan, Mahmoud II., died, and his successor, Abdul Medjid, assisted by the allied powers, pronounced the deposition of Mehemet Ali, who, after the bombardment of Beyrout, was compelled to give up most of the territory which he had seized and to return to his allegiance as Pasha of Egypt. The ministry of France, under M. Thiers, protested that the honour of France had been insulted by action being taken without her concurrence, and many threatening declarations of a warlike character were made. France, however, was not in a position to go to war with the allied powers, and the Thiers ministry had to give way to that of M. Guizot, who was friendly to an amicable understanding with England, and who, in the spring of 1840, had been here as an ambassador to endeavour to arrive at a friendly arrangement. It was certain that Louis Philippe, and the new and more reasonable ministry, neither wanted war nor a disagreement with this country, therefore they accepted the situation after some amenities had passed, and the unpleasant feeling was soon entirely dissipated.

It may be worth noticing as another illustration of the complaints of want of orderly arrangements in the royal household, that the eminent Frenchman, who was on a visit at Windsor, sat up late one night in conversation with two or three persons for about half an hour after most of the company had retired to rest, and that after wandering about in a vain effort to find his bed-room he thought he had discovered it, and slowly opening the door observed to his dismay that the room was occupied by a lady, who, assisted by her maid, was about to prepare for disrobing. Closing the door hastily he again traversed the corridors till a servant was found who directed him to his own apartment. In the morning her Majesty laughingly asked him whether he was aware that he had opened the door and nearly entered the ante-room of her apartment, and the eminent statesman made the best answer possible by humorously requesting that should he ever publish his memoirs, as other ministers had done, he might be permitted to mention the incident.

From the opening of the session in 1841 it had become evident to thoughtful people that the battle in parliament would eventually have to be fought on the lines of the repeal of the duties on corn. The Anti-Corn-law League was daily growing in extent and power; and though Lord Melbourne appeared to be indifferent to the principle of free-trade, and had not long before professed that the repeal of the duties on corn, or even a great reduction of them, would be out of the question, Lord Palmerston and Lord John Russell were emphatically on the side of the anti-corn-law members of the house, among whom were men of great ability and influence. But the Melbourne ministry was only prepared to advocate a fixed reduced duty, and was too weak to fight any battle or to support any prin-

ciple. Though it had passed humane and beneficial measures, the country was tired of its now aimless, nerveless existence. There was a deficit of two millions in the budget, and it was intended to endeavour to meet the deficiency by altering the duties on timber and reducing those on foreign sugar. The budget had been based on proposals for increased freedom of trade, and Lord John Russell had given notice that he should on the 31st of May move for a committee of the whole house to consider the acts of parliament relating to the trade in corn. He now announced that it was the intention of the government to impose only a fixed import duty of 8*s.* a quarter on wheat, 5*s.* on rye, 4*s.* 6*d.* on barley, and 3*s.* 4*d.* on oats. The Conservatives at once prepared to resist proposals which were obviously on the side of free-trade; and the more advanced of the anti-corn-law party was stimulated to greater exertion for procuring, not reduction of the duty, but its total abolition. The debate on the reduction of the sugar duties, in which Peel made a brilliant attack on the ministry, ended in the defeat of the government proposals; but when it was supposed that the ministry would resign, the chancellor of the exchequer (Mr. Baring) calmly gave notice that on the following Monday he would move "the usual sugar duties." Lord John Russell then moved an adjournment, and it was intimated that the proposed alterations in the duties on corn would be taken on the 4th of June. It was believed that after the corn-law debate the ministry would dissolve parliament, and appeal to the country with a free-trade policy; but they were not prepared for so bold a course, though the majority of the cabinet was in favour of a dissolution. "Under these circumstances," said Lord Melbourne to the Queen, "of course I felt that I could but go with them; so we shall go on, bring on the sugar duties, and then, if things are in

a pretty good state, dissolve." Here they had reckoned without Peel, who, when the sugar question was brought forward, seconded the motion that the duties should continue for another year, and gave notice that he should on the 31st of May move a vote of want of confidence in the ministry. This was done, and the motion was carried by a majority of one. On the 23d of June her Majesty prorogued parliament, which was dissolved on the 29th by royal proclamation, and preparations were made for a general election.

The Queen and Prince Albert were so well acquainted with the political situation and with the condition of the country that they shared the anxieties of those who had the immediate responsibility of legislating, for the relief of prevailing want and distress in various parts of the country, and for devising a financial scheme which would restore confidence and support national credit. The Prince had been for some time gaining information on public affairs, not only by studying the politics of the day, but by unreserved communications with ministers; and though he shared the regret of her Majesty at parting with those for whom they both felt a very sincere friendship, they saw that a change of government was necessary and inevitable. As a matter immediately affecting the Queen it was most important that on a change of ministry there should be no repetition of misunderstanding on the subject of the retirement of her Majesty's personal attendants, and that her reluctance to dismiss those who had been her companions should not lead to further imputations of political partisanship. The Prince, therefore, after consulting Lord Melbourne, instructed his secretary Mr. Anson to make some proposition to Sir Robert Peel by which the Queen might arrange that those ladies whose removal should be considered essential on political grounds

might voluntarily retire, an arrangement by which the Duchess of Bedford, the Duchess of Sutherland, and Lady Normanby alone resigned their appointments as ladies of the bed-chamber. These communications between the Prince and Sir Robert Peel had some effect in dissipating the awkwardness which the rather shy and reserved minister feared might ensue on their meeting for the first time in an official capacity. Sir Robert remembered that he had felt it necessary when in opposition to join in voting for the smaller allowance proposed to be granted to the husband of the Queen, and he thought that the Prince would remember it also; but he need have been under no apprehension of that kind. It might have passed entirely from the memory of both so far as it had any effect either on the temper or the good-will of Prince Albert. Sir Robert Peel had not had an opportunity of estimating his personal character; but when the opportunity came the usually reticent, but always sensitive, minister soon regarded him with genuine admiration and esteem, sentiments which became mutual before the two men had long known and understood each other.

We have already noted some of the amusements and festivities which attracted public attention about this time, and when Rachel, the famous French actress, was at the Italian Opera, and Adelaide Kemble at Covent Garden, the Queen was frequently present with the Prince at the theatre; but during the excitement of the political crisis they made some pleasant short excursions to various places not very far from London.

After an agreeable and interesting visit to the Archbishop of York at Nuneham, where they stayed three days, they drove to Oxford, "Commemoration" having been postponed for the arrival of the Prince, who was very cordially received. This and other visits, in fact most of their engagements at that busy

and rather unsettled season, were mentioned and briefly described in letters written by Prince Albert to the Duchess of Kent, who was on a visit to Germany, and for the first time since she left it in 1819 was staying at her former home at Amorbach, in Bavaria, on the estate belonging to her son, the Queen's half-brother, Prince Charles Leiningen. "It is like a dream that I am writing to you from this place," she wrote to the Queen. "My heart is so full. I am so occupied with you and Albert and the precious little creature. I was quite upset by the kind reception the poor people here gave me. Everywhere I have found proofs of affection and gratitude. . . . I occupy the rooms where your dear father lived, but Charles had one room arranged for me, which is most elegant and pretty. He has made many alterations in the house. Your father began them just when we left in March, 1819." In a reply containing very tender and grateful thanks for the loving expressions in the "long dear letter" from Amorbach, the Prince says: "To-morrow we visit the Duke of Devonshire at Chiswick, on Monday we go to see the *Trafalgar* launched at Woolwich. . . . Wednesday, Uncle Leopold and Aunt Louise arrive. . . . Friday I lay the foundation-stone of the London Porters' Association. To-day we had a chapter of the Bath: Sir Charles Napier was decorated. Yesterday was the last drawing-room of the season. All the world is rushing out of town to agitate the country for and against."

The launch of the *Trafalgar*, here referred to, took place on the 21st of June, 1841, and was a very fine spectacle. "The most imposing sight which I can remember," he wrote to his father. "There were about 500,000 people present, and the Thames was covered for miles with ships, steamers, barges, and boats. The wine used had been taken from the *Victory* after

the battle of Trafalgar. By the Queen's request the vessel was christened by Lady Bridport, a niece of Lord Nelson's." One great feature of the occasion was, that out of five hundred people on board the great vessel when it was launched at least a hundred had taken some part in the action which the name of the ship was intended to commemorate.

The visits of the King and Queen of the Belgians were always most welcome to her Majesty and Prince Albert, and it was a grief to them that though Queen Louise had been obliged to prolong her stay at Windsor Castle because of the illness of her son (the present King of the Belgians), they were compelled to start on their tour to Woburn and other places instead of remaining with her. To lose four days of her stay, of which every hour was precious, the Queen said was dreadful: for "the Queen of the Belgians had been an inmate of the palace for nearly six weeks, and during this stay, which had been such a happiness for me, we had become most intimate. Louise is perfect, so full of every kind and high feeling—a noble soul! Albert is the only equal to her in unselfishness. She never thinks of herself." In the light of these loving words it is easy to understand how her Majesty had been, and would again be, troubled when the policy of her dear friend's father, Louis Philippe, threatened to interfere with those cordial relations, which he himself professed to regard with so much satisfaction.

The round of pleasant visits to the Duke of Bedford at Woburn Abbey, and thence to Earl Cowper at Panshanger, and to Lord Melbourne at Brocket Hall, returning to town by way of Hatfield, the historical home of the Cecils, was enjoyed thoroughly. The Prince wrote to the Duchess of Kent that Woburn Abbey was really very beautiful, and as complete and comfortable as possible. Beside the family there were a good

many people there, Lord and Lady Grey, Lord and Lady Palmerston, the latter the accomplished and delightful sister of Lord Melbourne, Lord and Lady Ashley, Lord and Lady Leveson Gower, Lord Duncannon, Lord and Lady Verulam, Lord Salisbury, and others; while in the royal suite were Lady Lyttelton, Miss Cavendish, and lords and others in attendance. Melbourne was rather nervous about receiving the royal party, and no wonder, for he had reason to believe that his public career was ended, and that the Conservatives would come in with a good working majority. Beside this he had long been a widower, for his wife, the clever but erratic Lady Caroline Lamb, had died in 1828, when her mental condition left little doubt that much that had appeared strange in her former conduct was to be attributed to aberration of mind. Their son had died at a still earlier date, just as he had reached manhood, and the accomplished minister and humorous man of the world was left very solitary. It is not surprising that he felt deeply that his most cherished occupation was gone when he could no longer be a daily visitor at Windsor or Buckingham Palace. His retirement was the end of his political career; in the following year, 1842, he suffered from a stroke of paralysis, and he died six years afterwards. It must not be supposed, however, that Lord Melbourne was gloomy or disappointed at the prospect of relinquishing office. He appeared rather to be glad of the prospect of rest and the relief from responsibility, and was as cheerful and good-humoured as ever. The tour of visits made a very delightful holiday, amidst scenery so pretty that Prince Albert, speaking of that about Woburn, compared it to the Rosenau in the direction of the Fischbacher Thal; while he was also greatly interested in the antiquity and belongings of Hatfield House.

These excursions were the more emphatically pleasant because of the enthusiastic loyalty displayed by the people wherever the Queen and the Prince appeared. Indeed, this enthusiasm on more than one occasion appears to have taken a rather embarrassing form of expression, as at Dunstable, where, quite disregarding the escort of the 11th Hussars (Prince Albert's regiment), numbers of farmers rode with the royal carriage as a kind of loyal body-guard, and raised such a dust as nearly to smother its occupants; or at Woburn Abbey, where, as the Queen records, "a crowd of good, loyal people rode with us part of the way. They so pressed and pushed that it was as if we were hunting." The disturbed condition of the country and the murmurs of distress and consequent discontent had evidently not affected the public regard and personal interest and affection for the Queen. "Nothing could be more enthusiastic and affectionate than our reception *everywhere*," her Majesty wrote to King Leopold; "and I am happy to hear that our presence has left a favourable impression." "The loyalty in this country is certainly very striking." Prince Albert wrote in the same strain to his father, and added: "There is beyond all question a great depth of devotion towards the throne, the constitution, and the church in the English rural population which is most touching to witness."

When parliament met there was no doubt of the fate of the Whig administration, and though the debate on a motion of want of confidence lasted for a fortnight it ended in the ministry finding themselves in a considerable minority. The Queen had invited Lord Melbourne to Windsor on the evening following the division, and on taking leave of him the next morning before he left the castle was much affected. Melbourne maintained his appearance of good spirits, however, and comforted

her Majesty with the assurance that she might with confidence rely for advice and assistance on the ability and judgment of the Prince, who, on his part, expressed his sympathy for her by saying, "It is not alone the minister you lose, but a faithful and attached friend," and at the same time assuring her that he would do all that he could to be of use, though he feared that she would miss Lord Melbourne very much. The ex-minister was not satisfied till he had written to the Queen the evening after bidding farewell, saying that he had formed the highest opinion of Prince Albert's judgment, temper, and discretion, that he felt great consideration and security in the reflection that he left her Majesty in a situation in which she had the inestimable advantage of such advice and assistance, and that he also felt certain that the Queen could not do better than have recourse to it whenever it was needed, and rely upon it with confidence.

This opinion of the Prince was soon endorsed by the incoming minister, who, with the cabinet which he had promptly formed, repaired to Claremont on the 3d of September to kiss hands on their appointment. It must have been very shortly afterwards that Sir Robert Peel, introducing Lord Kingsdown, said that he would find the Prince to be one of the most extraordinary young men he had ever met with, and it is obvious that there was something mutually attractive between the honest and truth-speaking though rather reserved and highly cultured minister and the frank, patient, studious, and accomplished Prince, for in October we find the latter writing to "My dear Sir Robert," and sending for his inspection an édition de luxe of the *Lay of the Nibelungen*, in which the minister had in conversation expressed some interest.

Sir Robert Peel's own knowledge of and sympathy with art would have enabled him to estimate the judgment and pro-

ficiency of the Prince in this direction, but the attainments of his royal highness both in art and science were by this time generally known and appreciated, and the prime-minister had the happy opportunity of proposing that the Prince should become president of a royal commission to continue an inquiry already begun by a committee of the House of Commons, whether advantage should be taken of the rebuilding of the houses of parliament to organize the promotion and encouragement of the fine arts in the United Kingdom.

Nothing could have been more to the Prince's taste, and he entered into the proposal with enthusiasm, but at the same time with his usual thoughtful care. In the same letter which accompanied the book already referred to he wrote to Sir Robert Peel: that after thinking much of the proposed plan he had arrived at the conviction that there had better be no professional artist on the committee, as the benefit of an artist's opinion would be better obtained by taking it upon examination, and this would enable the commission to procure the different opinions of a great number of artists. Moreover, he feared that the discussion upon the various points would not be so free among the laymen if distinguished professors were present, as these would scarcely venture to maintain an opinion in opposition to those of the latter class. This was no less characteristic of the modesty of the Prince than the concluding line of his letter. "I only give you my crude views, and have no wish whatever to press them against the experience of others."

The building of the new houses of parliament would give an opportunity for the practical application and enlarged scope of this commission. On the 14th of October, 1834, the former houses of the legislature, which had long been inadequate in size and accommodation, were almost entirely destroyed

by fire, occasioned by the carelessness of a workman who had been employed to burn the disused "exchequer tallies"—square smooth sticks of wood, in which notches were cut representing the amounts received, and to be paid by, the exchequer. These sticks were split in half lengthwise, one half (the stock) being retained, and its exact counterpart (the counter-stock) being delivered to the person entitled to claim payment at a given date, which with the name of the person was written on the other or uncut edge of the stick. Tallies had been in use in very remote times for keeping accounts, and they were continued in the exchequer,—till a short time before the destruction of the buildings of parliament by the endeavour to get rid of them,—after the substitution of exchequer bills. The man employed to burn them crammed so many into a stove that the flues became overheated, and as these flues were close to if not in actual contact with some of the beams or timbers of the building the fire, carried along their course, burst into flame in several places. The conflagration spread so rapidly that for some time Westminster Hall and the Abbey were in great danger, and when by the help of a floating fire-engine it was finally extinguished, only the speaker's house and some of the public offices remained. The greater part of the records had been saved, and it was found that by refitting and adapting the buildings that had escaped destruction, provision might be made for the assembling of both Houses of Parliament without resorting to Buckingham Palace, which William the Fourth had offered to give up to the purposes of the legislature while new houses of parliament were being built. There was no very great alacrity displayed in this operation, for the first stone of the new and stately buildings had been laid without ceremony at the south-east corner of the speaker's house on the 27th of April,

1840; but now that the royal commission was formed the work was likely to be pushed on as rapidly as would be consistent with the magnitude of the structure and the imposing architectural and artistic scheme which was to be considered.

Sir Robert Peel was able to tell the Prince that the intimation of his consenting to preside at the commission had been received by the House of Commons with cordial satisfaction in every quarter of the house. His Royal Highness had made it a condition of his taking any part in it that the selection of the committee should be without party distinction, and this was faithfully observed; so that the Prince could say not only that the selection appeared to him to be an admirable one, but that he rejoiced that party distinctions had been excluded from that *national* undertaking.

The associations and the objects of this commission were in accordance with the tastes and the abilities of the Prince, and he was deeply sensible of the opportunity it afforded him of becoming more intimately acquainted with some of the most distinguished men of the day under conditions altogether without reference to politics. We learn that he told the Queen that he felt he owed to Sir Robert Peel his first initiation into public life, for that this commission was the commencement of his connection with the leading public and literary men of this country. It taught him more, he said, than anything else had done, and he always talked of it with pleasure. The commission itself consisted of Lord Lyndhurst, the Duke of Sutherland, the Marquis of Lansdowne, the Earl of Shrewsbury, the Earl of Aberdeen, Viscount Melbourne, Lord Ashburton, Lord Colborne, the Speaker (afterwards Lord Eversley), the Earl of Lincoln, Lord John Russell, Lord Francis Egerton, Lord Palmerston, Sir Robert Peel, Sir James Graham, Sir

Robert Inglis, Mr. Gally Knight, Mr. Benjamin Hawes, Mr. Henry Hallam, Mr. Samuel Rogers, Mr. George Vivian, and Mr. Thomas Vyse, to whom were subsequently (May, 1844) added Mr. (afterwards Lord) Macaulay and Lord Mahon.[1]

The birth of the Prince of Wales at Buckingham Palace on the 9th of November, 1841, greatly increased the happiness of the Queen and Prince Albert. The archbishop and the chief officers of state as usual awaited the event, and the Duchess of Kent had returned from Germany to be present. Mrs. Brough, one of the trusted domestics at Claremont—where she had been employed previous to her marriage—and who was well known to the Queen, was selected as nurse to the infant prince.

The public interest manifested throughout the country was an evidence that the nation had shared the hope of her Majesty, and rejoiced in its fulfilment. The birthday of the prince being Lord-mayor's Day, the civic dignitaries were among the large number of distinguished persons who went to offer their congratulations two days afterwards, when they were received by Prince Albert, the royal babe being brought into the room and carried round that he might be seen by all who were assembled.

The birth of an heir to the throne was of course celebrated

[1] Of those who were associated with Prince Albert in that commission several were already advanced in years; and few were living when in the spring of 1861, not long before his own lamented death, his Royal Highness remarked to the Queen that nearly all his commissioners were dead. Her Majesty made a memorandum of this observation in 1874, when the only survivors were Lord John Russell, Lord Stanhope, and Lord Eversley, who as Mr. Charles Shaw-Lefevre had been speaker of the House of Commons from 1839 to 1857. On the occasion of the attendance of the members of the legislature at St. Margaret's Church, Westminster, on the 22d of May this year (1887), where divine service was held to celebrate the jubilee of her Majesty's reign, Viscount Eversley, the latest survivor of the commission, walked to the church with Viscount Hampden, followed by the present speaker of the House of Commons, who led the procession of members from Westminster Hall to the church.

by general festivities, and the royal clemency was extended to prisoners and convicts, numbers of whom had their sentences commuted or their liberty restored.

On the 14th of December the Queen, by letters patent, created her infant son Prince of Wales and Earl of Chester: though it may be supposed that the ceremonial of investment was to be "taken as performed," since it was stated that the Queen thus ennobled and invested him with the principality and earldom "by girding him with a sword, by putting a coronet on his head and a gold ring on his finger, and also by delivering a gold rod into his hand that he may preside there and direct and defend these parts." The titles which the Prince directly inherited were those of a Duke of Saxony (by right of his father); and by right of his mother, Duke of Cornwall, Duke of Rothesay, Earl of Carrick, Baron of Renfrew, Lord of the Isles, and Great Steward of Scotland. The Queen quickly recovered strength, and on the 21st of November, the birthday of the princess-royal, was able to record in her journal her heartfelt love and gratitude when "dearest little pussy in such a smart white merino dress trimmed with blue, which mama had given her, and a pretty cap," was brought in by Prince Albert and placed on her bed.

On the 6th of December the court was once more at Windsor, and there were letters to be written, especially to Uncle Leopold, letters simple and impulsive, speaking of domestic happiness and affection as the true compensation for inevitable trials and vexations. Christmastide was to be kept in the same pleasant fashion as in the previous year, with Christmas-trees and decorations; but "To think," wrote the young mother, "that we have two children now, and one who enjoys the sight already, is like a dream." Prince Albert, in a letter to his father,

seemed to echo the tender sentiment: "To-day I have two children of my own to make gifts to, who, they know not why, are full of happy wonder at the German Christmas-tree and its radiant candles."

The festivities were enjoyed in home-like, merry fashion. On the last night of the old year the dance was kept up till midnight to usher in the new; but as the clock finished striking twelve there was a pause in the middle of the dance, and a flourish of trumpets was sounded according to the German fashion, "which," wrote the Queen in her journal, "had a fine solemn effect, and quite affected dear Albert, who turned pale and had tears in his eyes, and pressed my hand very warmly. It touched me, too, for I felt that he must think of his dear native country which he has left for me."

Preparations for the christening of the Prince of Wales in St. George's Chapel, Windsor, next occupied the court, for it was decided that the ceremony should be performed with more state than had attended previous royal baptisms within the palace, and one of the first considerations was the choice of a principal sponsor. The difficulty of selecting one out of many distinguished relatives was avoided by requesting King Frederick William IV. of Prussia to come to England and perform the office, and as he was sovereign of the chief Protestant nation on the Continent the choice was generally approved. There was still another difficulty, for leading politicians in Austria, Russia, and France were determined to see in the proposal an intention to give the visit political importance, and at once began to intrigue for the purpose of preventing it, while even in Prussia itself a good many of the court suspected, or professed to suspect, that the king, aided by Baron Bunsen, would take the opportunity of promoting one of his strange fancies—the Anglicanizing

of the Prussian Church. The Prussian monarch, like many rather loose-minded people, had a will of his own, and determined to disregard all the attempts to prevent a visit which he had long desired, and he even declined to make the journey by way of France and call on Louis Philippe. There appears to have been no political significance whatever in the matter. The king was, of course, an honoured guest, and was received on his arrival at Greenwich by Prince Albert, who took him to Windsor, where the Queen received him at the entrance-door of the castle with the usual ceremonial kiss and profound "courtesys." He—a fat middle-aged gentleman with a somewhat insignificant though pleasing face and not much hair—apologized profusely for appearing in common morning attire. He had the reputation of being an accomplished man, and seems to have possessed kindly and very agreeable manners; could tell a good story, and had a fund of witty anecdote. He was soon at home with the Queen, who made him dance with her in a quadrille during the festivities that followed the christening, though he had long given up dancing; and altogether he made a most favourable impression on those who were in the royal circle.

The Baroness Bunsen, who afterwards wrote an amusing and rather gushing account of the proceedings, says: "28th January, 1842. Came by railway to Windsor, and found that in the York Tower a comfortable set of rooms were awaiting us. The upper housemaid gave us tea and bread and butter—very refreshing; when dressed we went together to the corridor, soon met Lord de la Warr, the Duchess of Buccleuch, and Lord and Lady Westmoreland—the former showed us where to go—that is, to walk through the corridor, (a fairy scene—lights, pictures, moving figures of courtiers unknown) the apartments, which we passed through one after another till we reached the magnificent ball-

room where the guests were assembled to await the Queen's appearance. Among these guests stood our king himself, punctual to quarter past seven o'clock; soon came Prince Albert, to whom Lord de la Warr named me, when he spoke to me of Rome. We had not been there long before two gentlemen, walking in by the same door by which we had entered, and then turning and making profound bows towards the open door, showed that the Queen was coming. She approached me directly and said, with a gracious smile, 'I am very much pleased to see you;' then passed on, and after speaking a few moments to the King took his arm and moved on, 'God save the Queen' having begun to sound from the Waterloo Gallery, where the Queen has always dined since the king has been with her. . . . The scene was one of fairy tales, of undescribed magnificence, the proportions of the hall, the mass of light in suspension, the gold plate, and the table glittering with a thousand lights in branches of a proper height not to meet the eye. The king's health was drunk, then the Queen's, and then the Queen went out, followed by all her ladies. During the half-hour that elapsed before Prince Albert and the king followed the Queen, she did not sit, but went round to speak to the different ladies. She asked after my children, and gave me an opportunity of thanking her for the gracious permission to behold her Majesty so soon after my arrival. As soon as the king came the Queen went into the ball-room. . . . At half-past eleven, after the Queen had retired, I set out on my travels to my bed-chamber. I might have looked and wandered about some miles before I had found my door of exit, but was helped by an old gentleman, I believe Lord Albemarle."

On the 25th, at 10 o'clock in the morning, the imposing rite was performed in St. George's Chapel. It was a splendid scene;

the company consisting of ambassadors, cabinet ministers and their ladies, knights of the Garter with the insignia of their orders, archbishops, bishops, and officers and ladies of the household, the royal dukes and the princely cousins from Saxe-Coburg and Saxe-Weimar, who were in the Queen's procession, where the Duke of Wellington bore the sword of state before her Majesty and Prince Albert, the lord-chamberlain and the lord-steward walking on either side. Some of the officers of the household attended the King of Prussia, who was accompanied to the chapel by the other sponsors,—the Duchess of Saxe-Coburg represented by the Duchess of Kent, the Duke of Cambridge, the Duchess of Saxe-Gotha represented by the Duchess of Cambridge, the Princess Sophia represented by the Princess Augusta of Cambridge, and Prince Ferdinand of Saxe-Coburg. The Queen afterwards wrote in her journal: "It is impossible to describe how beautiful and imposing the effect of the whole scene was in the fine old chapel, with the banners, the music, and the light shining on the altar."

The infant prince, carried by his nurse, was conducted from the chapter-house to the chapel by the lord-chamberlain and other high officials. The Duchess of Buccleuch, mistress of the robes, took him from the nurse and placed him in the arms of the Archbishop of Canterbury, and he received the names of Albert Edward, those of his father and his maternal grandfather. Having, as the *Times* said, behaved during the ceremony "with princely decorum," he was restored to his nurse and reconducted to the chapter-house. There was a full choral service, and it had been proposed to conclude the ceremony with an anthem composed for the occasion by Mr. (afterwards Dr.) Elvey; but Prince Albert, with his usual clear good sense, had said: "No anthem. If the service ends by an anthem we shall all go out

criticising the music. We will have something we all know—something in which we can all join—something devotional. The 'Hallelujah Chorus;' we shall all join in that with our hearts." Accordingly the "Hallelujah Chorus" suitably concluded the ceremony.

The King of Prussia was afterwards invested with the order of the Garter by the Queen, a chapter of the order being held for the purpose; and in the evening there was a great banquet in St. George's Hall, where the health of the Prince of Wales was followed by those of the King of Prussia and the Queen and Prince Albert, claret being served from an enormous silver or silver-gilt vessel containing a quantity equal to a hogshead of wine. A grand concert in the Waterloo Gallery brought the proceedings to an end.

On the 3d of February parliament was opened by the Queen, and not only the inauguration of a new government, but the presence of the King of Prussia and other distinguished foreign visitors appeared to give special importance to the occasion. Again to quote from the Baroness Bunsen, who, it may be mentioned, was an Englishwoman, the wife of the accomplished and learned Prussian ambassador:—"The throngs in the streets, in the windows, on every spot where foot could stand—all looking so pleased—the splendid Horse Guards, the Grenadier Guards, the yeomen of the Body Guard; then, in the House of Lords, the peers in their robes, the beautifully dressed ladies, with many, many beautiful faces; last, the procession of the Queen's entry, and herself, looking worthy and fit to be the converging point of so many rays of grandeur. . . . The composure with which she filled the throne, while awaiting the Commons, was a test of character—no fidget and no apathy. Then her voice and enunciation could not be more perfect. In

short, it could not be said that *she did well*, but she *was* the Queen; she was, and felt herself to be, the acknowledged chief among grand national realities. Placed in a narrow space behind her Majesty's mace-bearers, and peeping over their shoulders, I was enabled to hide and subdue the emotion I felt, in consciousness of the mighty pages in the world's history condensed in the words, so impressively uttered in the silver tones of that feminine voice—Peace and War, the fate of millions, relations of countries, exertions of power felt to the extremities of the globe, alterations of corn-laws, the birth of a future sovereign, mentioned in solemn thankfulness to Him in whose hands are nations and rulers!"

There were indeed momentous events occurring, the possible issues of which were sufficient to cause the deepest anxiety, and the whole political horizon was overshadowed with clouds, many of which seemed to forebode danger if not disaster. Some of these clouds had already broken into storms. The most violent and alarming was in Afghanistan, whence very terrible news had arrived. The story of Cabul and the destruction of a British army, the dreadful sufferings of the fugitives in the Khyber Pass, and the return of our troops to the territory which had been occupied, forms no essential part of the present narrative except in so far as it relates to the general aspect of the affairs of the country and to those associations with the Queen which must inevitably belong to all important events affecting the condition and prospects of the nation, but we cannot entirely pass it over without some distinctive notice.

During the governorship of the Earl of Auckland the plain of the Punjab was in the hands of the warlike Sikhs, then under the rule of the famous Runjeet Singh, the Lion of Lahore. This plain of the Punjab lies between the north-

western boundary of British India and Persia, separated from a territory of desert by the mountainous region of Afghanistan, the great natural barrier between India and western Asia, and inhabited by a brave and hardy race. Through these highlands there are but two passes to the lands of the Indus, one of which, the Khyber Pass, formed by the valley of the Cabul river, has strong natural positions for fortification—Jellalabad and Peshawur—the chief centres of communication in the territory being Cabul, Ghuznee, Candahar, and Herat. In Afghanistan there had been a struggle for supremacy between Shah Sujah and Dost Mohammed, who ruled at Cabul; and Shah Sujah being defeated had taken refuge in the Sikh country, the ruler of which, Runjeet Singh, had, in the meantime, seized the province of Peshawur and some important positions in the north-west. Dost Mohammed of Cabul thereupon made war upon Runjeet Singh and called on the British to help him, at the same time that Shah Sujah himself had taken refuge with the British force, from whom he asked protection.

As we could or did not under the circumstances consent to help Dost Mohammed, he applied to Persia, which had a keen eye on Herat, and was supposed to be on good terms with Russia. It appeared to Lord Auckland that the best way to put an end to probable Persian and Russian intervention was to espouse the cause of Shah Sujah and commence hostilities against the ruler of Cabul, especially as Herat, then under the rule of an independent chief, was besieged by a Persian force, who, however, were defeated by the defenders under Lieutenant Pottinger. The governor-general decided that the British must turn out Dost Mohammed and be in command at Cabul. Ships were sent to the Persian Gulf to draw away the force from Herat, and though Runjeet Singh, of course, refused to let our

troops march through Lahore, and we had to fight our way through the hostile territory of Scinde, we took Ghuzni, reached Cabul, drove out Dost Mohammed, and set up Shah Sujah, who was detested by the people, and we were obliged to maintain him, or, in other words, to maintain our own position, by keeping a large army in that remote place at an enormous expenditure of money. Runjeet Singh was to hold possession of Peshawur, which was still claimed by the Afghans. The thanks of parliament were voted to the commander-in-chief, Major-general Elphinstone, and there was a good deal of glorification among people who did not quite understand the military situation—among them Macaulay, who, because he had recently returned from India with all the honours of his new code, was supposed to be something of an authority. The Duke of Wellington, however, who knew more about it, while not refusing a tribute to the courage and endurance of the army, shook his head very seriously.

In spite of the apathy of the people of Cabul and their undisguised dislike of the ruler, whom they regarded as the tool of the British, whose pensioner he had long been, our officers there seemed to think they were so secure that they sent to India for their wives and families, and a considerable number of troops were sent back, the remaining force (at the end of 1839) being about 8000 men, consisting of Europeans and Sepoys. Dost Mohammed had sought refuge in Bokhara, but having reason to fear treachery, gave himself up to the British, an event which increased the hatred of the people at Cabul against us and Shah Sujah. Runjeet Singh, the "Old Lion," died, and the Sikhs were ready to expend their fury on our troops if they had the chance.

Akbar Khan, the son of Dost Mohammed, was intriguing

and conspiring to retrieve the territory of which we had taken possession. The situation was one of extreme peril, and demanded constant watchfulness, activity, and promptitude, for, in fact, the whole force lying in false security at Cabul had been trapped. Sir William Macnaghten, the civil envoy, was anxious to return to British territory as he had been made governor of Bombay. Major-general Elphinstone was old and deficient in the energy and promptitude that were necessary in a perilous crisis, even if the peril had been realized; and Sir Alexander Burnes, who succeeded Macnaghten as British minister, and upon whom the main responsibility for the Cabul enterprise was afterwards laid, was not aware of the threatening danger.

At last it burst upon them. In October, 1841, Sir Robert Sale left Cabul for Jellalabad, on the route to our own territory; but the tribes were in revolt, the mountain passes had to be traversed, and winter had set in. Before he had ended his march Cabul itself was in a flame of insurrection. On the 2d of November the mob surrounded Burnes's house; his military secretary was shot, and he, his brother, and Macnaghten, who had not been able to get out of the city, were treacherously murdered, the latter by Akbar Khan himself.

Then came the humiliation of opening negotiations with the chiefs, for the supply of food was failing and was soon exhausted, and Sale, who had reached Jellalabad, and General Nott, who was at Candahar, could render no help to the perishing creatures at Cabul. There was nothing for them but to attempt to make their way through the Khyber Pass, taking with them the women and children; but before they set out they had to submit to relinquish all the treasure and all the guns except six. The forts had already been given up, and the cantonments, where the starving troops and non-combatants dwelt, were at the

mercy of their treacherous foes, who kept none of the promises that they had made, though four officers were left as hostages and 40,000 rupees were paid to the Afghans. Large sums were paid to the murderous Akbar for the escort which he promised but never provided. On the 6th of January, 1842, the dreadful retreat commenced; but through the deep snow and exposed to the bitter cold little progress could be made, for it was the depth of winter, and the ill-furnished troops could do little to diminish the difficulties of a route that lay across a river which had to be bridged over, and along wild desert and rugged mountains. There were about 4500 soldiers, including 2800 natives, with six guns, and 12,000 camp-followers and non-combatants, including women, among whom were Lady Sale, Lady Macnaghten and other ladies, who were no better provided than the others. Between ranges of mountains, from the heights of which the treacherous tribesmen fired upon the mass of wretched fugitives, who could not make more progress than five or six miles a day, the journey proceeded. There was not enough provision for more than a third of their number, they were in rags, and at night the few tattered tents afforded little shelter from the icy wind. On the third day they entered the Pass of Khoord Cabul for the Khyber Pass. Between ranges of high mountains and through half-frozen torrents, which had to be forded, or over six feet of snow, the gorge extended for six miles. Lady Sale, with marvellous fortitude, pressed on, and encouraged others to follow her example. Under the hail of bullets men, women, and children fell wounded to die. The outlet of the pass was crowded with the dead,—the stream was red with blood. At first the soldiers had been mutinous and disorganized; but after a time, in the face of the common danger, they grew steady, and with their old spirit and deter-

mination drove back their assailants whenever the latter, because of superior numbers, ventured to come to close quarters and a hand-to-hand fight. Akbar Khan more than once communicated with the remaining officers, and promised aid which never came. One of his later proposals, however, was accepted and fulfilled. Lady Sale was wounded, but she and the other women and the children who had escaped were to be taken in his custody, with the old and suffering General Elphinstone, to Peshawur. It was also granted that the husbands of the surviving married ladies should go with their wives. Thus a number of the fugitives escaped massacre or death from cold and exhaustion. On the 12th and 13th of Januuary the force numbered but a few men; but that devoted band went on, and thirty soldiers, all who were left at the later date, died like brave men fighting against numbers. They had made a stand upon the slope of a hill and sold the remnant of their lives dearly till they were overpowered and slain. Only the officers left as hostages remained of that army of Cabul—British Sepoys and camp-followers all had perished except one man, who, on the very day that the last gallant band died face to face with the enemy, rode wounded and fainting up to the walls of Jellalabad: his hand half consciously grasping a broken sword; the pony that he rode worn out and staggering. He took the fearful intelligence to General Sale, who, with his officers and the small force under his command, was himself holding a perilous position.

This news had reached England only the day before Sir Robert Peel proposed to parliament (March, 1842) a measure of finance by which, by means of a tax not exceeding 7*d.* in the pound on all incomes over £150 a year, he sought to save the credit of the country, and to provide for demands which had to be satisfied at a time of falling revenue and with a deficit of two

and a half millions, increased to twice that amount by the cost of this Afghan expedition. With supreme self-control, and unabated confidence in the spirit and resources of the nation, the prime-minister proposed and carried his measure, though he had the weight upon his heart of the ill tidings which were then known only to himself and the members of the government.

The Queen was deeply grieved, not only by the disaster which had befallen British arms in Afghanistan, but by the sufferings of those who had made that march to death, and of the women and children who had escaped the last fatal stage of the journey. It seemed evident that a bold financial measure could alone restore public confidence and help to revive the trade of the country; and both her Majesty and the Prince believed in the sound and practical ability of Peel, an opinion which was rapidly endorsed by the rising of the funds, and a general hopeful tendency, which was justified by the gradual, if slow, restoration of commercial enterprise.

The Queen had clearly recognized that the measure was one of national and even patriotic appeal, and from the first moment had made known to the prime-minister that she desired not to be exempted from the payment of the income-tax. The deep distress and, partly as a consequence, the rioting and disturbances which grew to so alarming a pitch in the northern mining, manufacturing, and ironworking districts, were not suppressed without the military as well as the civil force being several times employed. As we have seen, some who called themselves Chartists, if not important in point of numbers or influence, were persistent in fomenting disturbances, but the taxes on food, especially what was called the "bread-tax," were assigned as a reason for much of the disorder. In several parts of the kingdom the suffering of the people was appalling, and in many

centres of industry the pressure upon the poor-rates because of the large number of starving families became very serious: in Leeds, for instance, it was declared that one-fifth of the entire population was dependent on parochial relief. Mr. Cobden, Mr. Bright, and the promoters of the powerful and active Anti-Corn-law League were opposed to the adoption of a sliding-scale by which the duties on corn might be adjusted, as they argued that to fix a sliding-scale so as to secure to the land-owner a certain price for corn was inconsistent, unless there should also be a sliding-scale for wages, and, indeed, that the starving people should themselves be the judges of when and how much corn was wanted, and that the government had no right to impose a tax on corn for the purpose of adjusting the profits of the land-owners. At the end of the session Mr. Duncombe moved an address to the Queen praying that if no improvement in the condition of the people took place after the prorogation, parliament should be reassembled to consider an alteration of the commerce in corn. The government treated this with silence till the taunts of his opponents roused Peel, who with passionate sarcasm denounced the obstruction of business by these repeated motions against the corn-laws. To this Cobden retorted with equal energy that the salvation of the people from famine or the workhouse was the essence of public business. Would the right honourable baronet, he asked, resist the appeals which had been made to him, or would he rather cherish the true interests of the country and not allow himself to be dragged down by a section of the aristocracy? He must take sides, and that instantly; and should he by so doing displease his political supporters, there was an answer ready. He might say that he found the country in distress, and he gave it prosperity; the people starving, and he gave them food; that he found the large

capitalists of the country paralysed, and he made them prosperous. This was most significant language viewed by the light of subsequent events. The whole moral atmosphere of parliament was growing electric, the debates not only earnest but impassioned.

Happily the harvest of 1842 was an abundant one, and this with the relief certainly obtained by Peel's financial scheme had an animating effect on the country; but dark clouds still lowered. There were disturbances and outrages in Ireland, and O'Connell had promised that 1843 should positively be the repeal year, by which he probably meant that there should be an Irish parliament on College Green, and that what was at that time included in "Home Rule" should be effected. Riots were increasing in Wales, because of the not unreasonable opposition of the small farmers to the charges for maintenance of highways, and the impositions of tolls which pressed hardly on the poor cotters. War was still going on in China. It began in 1838, in consequence of misunderstanding and high-handed proceedings on the part of the Chinese commissioner Lin. Under cover of the declaration of the Chinese government that the trade in opium should not be carried on, and though our government had made known that it would not protect British ships carrying the forbidden commodity, he took the opportunity of proceeding against our commerce by blockading our factories at Canton, where Captain Elliot had been compelled to surrender 20,000 chests of opium. A commission was given to Sir Henry Pottinger, who was sent out with full powers for peace or war, and it came to war, a result which was condemned by a large number of the most just and patriotic of Englishmen, and was spoken of with bated breath, and not without some sense of shame in many hearts long after the Chinese had been utterly defeated in an unequal struggle by our engines of destruction,

and had paid an indemnity of above five millions sterling, including the value of the opium that had been confiscated in 1838.

Across the Atlantic the Americans had bitter grievances against us because of the right claimed by our cruisers to overhaul American vessels to see if they were British ships carrying on the slave-trade under the United States' flag. In addition to this was a very awkward dispute about the settlement of the Maine and Canadian frontier. At the same time we had to guard against disaffection by maintaining military forces at the Cape and in the West Indies, and to keep an eye on Portugal, where an insurrection was prevented by our fleet appearing in the Tagus.

The Queen and Prince Albert had much to do with the business of the state, and these duties were largely increased as the ability and sound judgment of the Prince became recognized by ministers. To the ordinary daily work that belonged to political and foreign affairs were added those public claims from various bodies and societies for the promotion of art, science, and objects of benevolence to which the Prince gave willing and earnest aid. His speeches were serious, brief, and admirably to the point on occasions when he was invited to preside at meetings of this kind. One of them, delivered at a dinner for supporting the claims of the Literary Fund, was remarkably pithy, when, in proposing the prosperity of the institution, he said: "It stands unrivalled in any country, and ought to command our warmest sympathies, as providing for the exigencies of those who, following the call of genius and forgetting every other consideration, pursue merely the cultivation of the human mind and science. What can then be more proper for us than gratefully to remember the benefits derived from their disinterested exertions, and cheerfully to contribute to their wants!"

The excursions which had been made by her Majesty and Prince Albert had elicited such ample evidences of loyalty and affection that the Queen had good reason for showing her confidence in the good-will of all classes of her subjects. Her anxiety occasioned by the disturbed condition of the country was unaccompanied by any distrust of the manifest regard in which she was held, or of the public belief in her desire to aid in the adoption of measures to mitigate the prevalent distress. We have already noted that some costly and splendid entertainments in which the court participated, were in great measure designed for the purpose of stimulating trade, and although these festivities caused some expressions of discontent because of their alleged gaiety and extravagance, such objections were but temporary, for it soon became known that the Queen had not been led away by any thoughtless desire for amusement or for unnecessary and vain display in promoting those brilliant assemblies; and when the suggestion was made that their import was misunderstood and their consistency suspected, they were not repeated. Any murmurs that they may have occasioned were of no deep significance and immediately died away or were lost amidst renewed expressions of attachment and loyalty, which rose to enthusiastic declarations when shortly afterwards her Majesty was in imminent danger from the attempts of malicious and ignorant assailants.

On Sunday the 29th of August (1842) at two o'clock the Queen and Prince Albert were returning from the Chapel Royal, St. James's, and as they drove slowly along the Mall the usual crowd of spectators under the trees on the left bowed and cheered. Just as the carriage had reached Stafford House, Prince Albert saw a man step out from the crowd and present a pistol full at him at a distance of only two paces, so that he

heard the snap of the trigger. The pistol missed fire, and nobody but the Prince appeared to have noticed the occurrence, the Queen, who had been bowing to the people on the right, having observed nothing. On reaching the palace his Royal Highness cautiously asked the footmen who had been at the back of the carriage if they had noticed a man step forward and stretch out his hand towards the carriage as if he wanted to throw a petition; but they had not seen it. Her Majesty and the Prince were at once impressed with the importance of keeping the matter from the knowledge of anyone in the palace except Colonel Arbuthnot, one of their equerries, whom they directed immediately to report what had happened to the inspector of police, to Sir Robert Peel, and to Sir James Graham. All was quiet near the palace, the crowd had dispersed after having seen the Queen, and when Prince Albert went out on the balcony there were no signs of such commotion as would have followed had the offender been apprehended. In the afternoon when Sir Robert Peel arrived with the head of the police to make further inquiries the Prince, whose statement and description of the man were taken down in writing, began almost to distrust himself and what he had seen while the carriage was driving rapidly homeward. The next morning, however, there arrived at the palace a boy (named Pearse), who stuttered a great deal, but declared that he had seen the man present the pistol but not fire, and had heard him exclaim, "Fool that I was, not to fire!" An elderly gentleman who had also witnessed it took down the boy's name and address; but as he had not put in an appearance, the lad went next morning to the palace to tell what he knew. Every precaution was taken by the police; and though the Queen was agitated and much affected by the still threatening danger, she determined, following medical

advice, to go out again, since had she and the Prince remained in seclusion while search was being made, they might have shut themselves up for an indefinite time; and as the culprit knew nothing of his attempt having been discovered he would perhaps be arrested while skulking about the palace.

At four o'clock on the Monday evening they drove out, the carriage going at a rapid pace, and the two equerries, Colonel Wylde and Colonel Arbuthnot, riding close to it. It may be imagined that the police were on the alert, and that the Queen and the Prince, to use the common phrase, "had their eyes about them" as they went through the parks and towards Hampstead. It was a delightful early summer's day, and there were hosts of people on foot to greet them as they went quickly past. Nothing occurred on the road till, near the end of the journey back, when the carriages descending Constitution Hill having reached the part of the road between the Green Park and the garden wall, a shot was fired from a spot just opposite that on which Oxford had made his attempt two years before. The assailant stood only five paces from the left-hand side of the carriage, so that Prince Albert recognized him at once as the fellow who had made the previous attempt. The Queen exhibited the calm demeanour which she usually preserved under circumstances of danger, though she heard the report of the pistol, the shot from which, if there was any shot, passed below the carriage, the miscreant's hand having been dashed down by a police-constable, while he was instantly seized by a private of the Fusilier Guards and conveyed to the lodge adjoining the palace, where he was searched, and a ball, a little powder, and the discharged pistol, which was still warm, were taken from him. He refused to confess what were his motives for the abominable attempt, and would give no account of himself.

Count Mensdorff and the Duchess of Kent were in a carriage closely following that of the Queen when the shot was fired, and the Duchess Bernhard of Weimar was on horseback a few yards off. It is recorded by Lady Bloomfield (then Miss Liddell, one of her Majesty's maids of honour in waiting) that nothing had been said to the ladies of the household of what had been expected to occur, and that, contrary to the Queen's usual custom, neither of the ladies had been desired to accompany her, as her Majesty would not unnecessarily expose them to the danger which she herself had to encounter.

Prince Albert, writing to his father the next day, said: "We felt as if a load had been taken off our hearts, and we thanked the Almighty for having preserved us a second time from so great a danger." The Queen preserved her self-possession wonderfully, and when Mr. Anson saw her the same evening she told him she had fully expected to be attacked, and it was a relief to her to have it over. "She had for some time been under the impression that one of these mad attempts would be made, and that she never could have existed under the uncertainty of a concealed attack. She would much rather run the immediate risk at any time, than have the presentiment of danger constantly hovering over her. She had been much gratified by the kind feeling people had shown. It was perhaps not so boisterous as on the occasion of Oxford's attempt, but the feeling now was of a deeper cast." Writing to King Leopold the day after the occurrence, the Queen said: "I was really not at all frightened, and feel very proud at dear Uncle Mensdorff[1] calling me 'very courageous,' which I shall ever remember with peculiar pride, coming from so distinguished an officer as he is. . . .

[1] Count Mensdorff, an officer of high rank in the Austrian service, had married the elder sister of the Duchess of Kent. His son was the fellow-student and friend of Prince Albert.

The feeling of horror is very great in the public, and great affection is shown us."

On receiving the intelligence of the outrage, both houses of parliament at once adjourned the business of the sitting, and next day presented addresses of heart-felt congratulation to her Majesty, who looked pale and somewhat depressed, but in the evening accompanied Prince Albert to the Italian opera, where outbursts of cheering were repeated during the singing of the national anthem, and the reception given to Prince Albert, as well as to the Queen, was only to be described as "tremendous."

The criminal who had fired the pistol was named John Francis, and was the son of a machinist at Drury Lane Theatre. He had been for some time out of work, but it was not apparently from any cause but an evil desire for notoriety that he made the attempt with which he was charged. After being examined by the privy-council he was tried at the Central Criminal Court, and his demeanour was that of an impudent young scoundrel. He made coarsely witty replies to the questions put to him, and endeavoured to brazen it out by chaffing the judges. Perhaps as an imitator of Oxford he anticipated a lenient sentence, as he could not be brought in insane; but the hardened young villain broke down utterly when sentence of death was passed on him, and he was removed fainting from the dock. Neither the Queen nor Prince Albert could endure that the capital sentence should be inflicted, however, and on their strong representation that it had not been proved that the pistol was loaded, and that he therefore should not be executed for attempting to kill or wound, the sentence was, after grave consultation, commuted to transportation for life.

Her Majesty and the Prince, who had shared the danger, were both of opinion that while the law treated such dastardly

attempts as "high treason" and gave them almost the importance of a state trial, with the capital sentence to follow on conviction, a commutation of the sentence was the only course to be pursued, so far as their own feelings were concerned; and that these conditions gave more encouragement to such offences than a trial for misdemeanour with a severe punishment that would carry with it a sense of degradation and infamy instead of a sort of notoriety. This opinion was remarkably emphasized by another attempt which was made the very day after the commutation of Francis' sentence was announced, but which, as the evidence proved, had been contemplated some days beforehand.

On Sunday the 3d of July (1842), as the Queen with Prince Albert and King Leopold were on the way to the Chapel Royal in the same carriage, a wretched deformed creature named Bean, a chemist's assistant, was seen by several persons to level a pistol at the royal party. The pistol missed fire, and a plucky lad of sixteen, named Dassett, who wrenched the weapon from Bean's hand and collared him, called upon some of the crowd for help. The people around treated the matter as a joke, and Dassett and his brother dragged the hunchback to the place where some policemen were standing; but they also thought he was making fun of them and resented it by pushing him aside, so that between the constables and the crowd he was obliged to release his hold of the culprit, who got away, leaving his pistol in the lad's hand. Another policeman, to whom he appealed, showing him the weapon, was full of alacrity to take somebody into custody, and would have arrested Dassett on the charge of attempting to shoot at the Queen, and pretending that he had taken the pistol from someone else. Happily other people, who had witnessed the whole affair, came up and prevented this, and

the pistol was taken to a police inspector, who found that it contained powder, paper tightly rammed down, and some pieces of a clay pipe—a dangerous charge if the weapon had gone off.

The Queen did not know of the affair till after she had returned to the palace, and on being told of it she showed no alarm, but said she had expected a repetition of such attempts while the law remained unaltered.

Sir Robert Peel, who was at Cambridge, hurried to London, and went at once to the palace to consult with Prince Albert. Her Majesty entered the room while they were conversing, and the prime-minister, usually so reserved and undemonstrative in manner, could not control his emotion, and burst into tears.

It was quickly decided that offences against the life of the Queen, such as those which had been committed by Oxford, Francis, and Bean, should be punished as misdemeanours, and that the punishment should be degrading. On the 12th of July a bill was brought forward in parliament by which the penalty for such an offence was to be transportation for seven years or imprisonment with or without hard labour for a term not exceeding three years, the culprit to be publicly or privately whipped as often, and in such manner and form, as the court should direct, not exceeding thrice. This bill became law on the 16th of July, and on the 25th of August Bean was tried for misdemeanour and sentenced to eighteen months' imprisonment.

Amidst the trouble of these events and the pressure and anxiety of public affairs came a bright and pleasant visit. On the 12th of May, Prince Ernest, the beloved elder brother of Prince Albert, had married the Princess Alexandrine of Baden, and would fain have had his brother beside him at Carlsruhe on the occasion of his wedding, but the pressure of public affairs here made it desirable for Prince Albert not to leave the Queen

even for so short a time. Her Majesty, however, was deeply interested in the event. "My heart is full, very full, of this marriage," she wrote to King Leopold. "I have entreated Ernest to pass his honeymoon with us, and I beg you to urge him to do it; for he witnessed *our* first happiness, and we must, therefore, witness his." The prince and his bride had not arrived till the first days in July, and there was to be a happy quiet time in the comparatively peaceful seclusion of Claremont, where the Queen would still be close to the metropolis and, so to speak, within call while parliament was sitting.

Just before the departure of her Majesty and the Prince for Claremont a very pleasant incident occurred which is illustrative of their simple tastes and of the delight which they both took in music. Mendelssohn, the great composer, was in London and had been more than once to Buckingham Palace, and now, about an hour before the royal party were to start, he came again in response to an invitation from Prince Albert, to try the organ before he left England. The Queen entered the room as he was talking to the Prince, and after all three had helped to pick up a number of loose leaves of music which the wind from the open window had scattered over the floor, Prince Albert played a chorale at the request of Mendelssohn, who, in the letter to his mother describing the visit, says that the performance would have done credit to any professional. Then the great composer played a chorus from his *St. Paul;* Prince Albert cleverly managing "the stops" with great skill and exquisite taste, and both he and the Queen joining in the chorus. The Queen would have sung one of Mendelssohn's songs, but they were all packed up to go to Claremont, and when she went to see if they could be unpacked Prince Albert took the opportunity of presenting his visitor with a handsome ring in a case

and engraved "V. R. 1842," as a souvenir of his farewell visit, specially prepared for the occasion. The Queen came back rather provoked that the songs had been taken away with her other belongings; and she consented to sing something of "Gluck;" but the Princess of Gotha and the Duchess of Kent came in and there was an adjournment to her Majesty's sitting-room, where, while the rest were talking, Mendelssohn rummaged among the music till he found his first set of songs, and the Queen sang one of them (Schöner und Schöner Schmuck Sich) "quite charmingly," with only one little mistake in taking the D and D sharp. Afterwards she sang another "quite faultlessly and with charming feeling and expression," but not without some after confession of apprehension lest she had not acquitted herself well in the hearing of the distinguished master. Then Prince Albert sang; and the pleasant visit terminated with a "theme" extemporized by Mendelssohn from the chorale first played and the song sung by the Prince, the composer also bringing in the songs that the Queen had sung. The farewells were exchanged;—as Mendelssohn took his leave, the royal carriages with the scarlet outriders were waiting at the door, and in a quarter of an hour the flag on the archway was lowered, and the *Court Circular* had to announce the departure of her Majesty and the Prince for Claremont.

Intelligence of more trouble and grief was to reach them in their pleasant retreat. A letter came from Sir Robert Peel on the 14th of July, announcing that the Duke of Orleans, the admirable and accomplished eldest son of Louis Philippe, had died in consequence of injuries received by leaping from his carriage, the horses having run away near the Porte Maillot, Paris, as he was returning to Plombières from a visit to the king and queen at Neuilly. The affection and esteem in which the

Duke of Orleans was held by the Queen and Prince Albert, no less than by his sister the Queen of the Belgians, and the family of Saxe-Coburg, to which he was related by marriage, gave poignancy to the sad news. To King Leopold, who had at once gone with his queen to Paris, her Majesty wrote: "I can easily imagine your horror and astonishment. My poor dearest Louise, how my heart bleeds for her! I know how she loved poor Chartres—and deservedly—for he was so noble and good! All our anxiety now is to hear how dear frail Hélène (the Duchess of Orleans) has borne this too dreadful loss. She loved him so, and he was so devoted to her! . . . We can hardly think of anything but this terrible misfortune, and of all of you." The duke was the favourite brother of the Queen of the Belgians, and her grief, the king had written, when she knew that it was him she had lost, "was astounding." When she wrote to the Queen she spoke of the deep affliction of the King and, Queen of the French, whose hair had turned white with grief for him who "was the head and the heart and soul of the whole family." There seemed to be a presage of coming calamity for that family, and the Queen and Prince Albert were not without some such feeling. "Perhaps poor Chartres is saved great sorrow and grief," her Majesty wrote in a later letter to her uncle. "*Him* we must *not* pity."

Sad, indeed, was the ceremony when the King of the French, at the opening of an extraordinary session of the chambers rendered necessary by the death of the duke, could scarcely control a passionate burst of grief during the reading of the address which referred to the calamity that had befallen his house by the death of "that dearly beloved son, whom I regarded as destined to replace me on the throne, and who was the glory and support of my old age."

Amidst private griefs and troubles and cares of state her Majesty and Prince Albert, who, as we have seen, had also to fulfil various public engagements, did not altogether relinquish those recreations in which literature, music, and art were a solace as well as a great delight.

The Queen at about this time gave considerable attention to the study of water-colour drawing, in which she was instructed by Mr. W. Leighton Leitch, an artist who, from very humble beginnings, and after the pursuit of his art under many difficulties and privations, had become a famous teacher and an admired landscape-painter.[1] A portfolio of Mr. Leitch's drawings had been seen at Stafford House, and were so much admired that the Duchess of Sutherland took them to Buckingham Palace to show them to her Majesty and the Prince Consort, who were greatly pleased with them and selected two pictures of which the artist received her Majesty's command to make copies.

Lady Canning, for whom the Queen had a great regard, was at that time a pupil of Leitch, and had presented to her Majesty some of her sketches, which the Queen had warmly praised, saying that she was herself very fond of drawing, but that, though she had had several masters, she could not get on as she wished. Her Majesty then inquired of Lady Canning from whom she had received lessons, and on being told that it was Mr. Leitch, at once remembered that this was the artist whose water-colour drawings had pleased her and the Prince so much. Shortly afterwards Leitch was sent for to go down to Windsor to give her Majesty a series of lessons in water-colour painting. On arriving at Windsor at the time named, the artist was conducted by a page and accompanied by Lady Canning to the

[1] An extremely interesting memoir of William Leighton Leitch by Mr. A. Macgeorge has been published by Messrs. Blackie & Son, and contains some account of his long and most agreeable associations with the royal family as teacher of drawing.

Queen's apartment across the gallery, and in a minute they were in the presence of her Majesty. Lady Canning, who was a step in advance, said, "Your Majesty, this is Mr. Leitch, the artist of whom I have spoken so much, and who wishes to express the happiness he has in being able to attend upon your Majesty." The Queen immediately said: "Mr. Leitch, there are a good many of your pupils here who are my friends, among them Lady Canning, and I admire their talent for water-colour painting. I have therefore sent for you, and hope I may have the benefit of your lessons." Mr. Leitch in his account of the visit says: "I really do not know what I replied to these kind words, but I was charmed with the benevolent expression and gracious manner of her Majesty. Her Majesty then asked, 'Will this table do for the lesson?' 'Perfectly,' I said, 'if the end were moved to the left of the window.' The Queen then put her hand to the table and assisted Lady Canning and me to move it, and we were at once seated ready to begin."

The Queen made a special request that she should have lessons commencing with the same elementary instruction which had been received by Lady Canning, and assured the teacher that she was very conscientious in her work, and would do what she was told to do. The teacher was one who could make the elementary lesson on the principles of composition, of light and shade, and of colour, truly interesting by practical examples, painting as he went on with a facility and effect which seems to have surprised and delighted the royal student, who appointed an early day for a second lesson, and agreed to practise the examples in colour and the method of obtaining the proper shadows. Under Mr. Leitch's instructions her Majesty attained to great proficiency in painting. On the occasion of one of his visits, Mr. Leitch saw a drawing of a subject chosen by the

Queen, done entirely by herself, and, as the artist himself said, "really admirably done." He liked it so much that he obtained permission to take it away in order to have it properly mounted. It was lying in his studio when Stanfield called on him, and observing the drawing asked whose work it was. Leitch said it was by a pupil of his. "Oh, nonsense!" said Stanfield. "Yes," said Leitch, "and it is by a lady." Stanfield looked at it again and said, "Well, she paints too well for an amateur. She will be soon entering the ranks as a professional artist." Mr. Leitch's attendance on the Queen, at Windsor and Osborne as well as at Buckingham Palace, extended, with intervals of various length, over a period of twenty-two years, for in 1863 we read of his being at Balmoral; and it need scarcely be said that he became teacher to the royal children, and later to the Princess of Wales, till the demands of the higher practice of his art obliged him to discontinue giving lessons.

Her Majesty had been looking forward to an autumn visit to the King and Queen of the Belgians at Brussels, where she and the Prince were also to meet some members of the French royal family, but the calamity which had bereaved them of the Duke of Orleans of course made this impracticable, and arrangements were made for a brief tour in Scotland.

Many serious disturbances continued in the manufacturing districts, and they had extended to Glasgow, where unemployed operatives had made threatening demonstrations on the streets, but these disorders had no such political significance as to dismay the Queen. She had good reason for believing that no inimical feeling towards herself was associated with them, and assuredly there was no more reason for distrust in Scotland than in England. If such a suspicion could have existed for a moment it would have been dissipated by the earnest intensity and

fervour of the loyal welcome which awaited her and found exuberant expression the moment she and her royal consort appeared among the Scottish people.

The Queen, in her *Leaves from the Journal of Our Life in the Highlands*, which has been published in a popular form, has graphically described her own impressions during this first visit to Scotland. These "leaves" and those which refer to subsequent journeys make only a small volume, but it is so full of examples of the frankness and simplicity of disposition, the faculty of being pleased with the intelligent observation of anything that has true human interest, and the kindly good-will for small services and civilities, which characterize her Majesty, that in it she seems to be speaking confidentially. As Mr. Arthur Helps says in the preface which he wrote: "The book is mainly confined to the natural expressions of a mind rejoicing in the beauties of nature, and throwing itself, with a delight rendered keener by the rarity of its opportunities, into the enjoyment of a life removed for the moment from the pressure of public cares."

Before daylight on the morning of the 29th of August (1842) the Queen and Prince Albert prepared to set out from Windsor. The weather was inclement, and breakfast had been partaken of under the strange conditions of its appearing to be served at night; but the travellers looked forward to their voyage with keen interest in "a thorough change," not unassociated with a possible spice of adventure. The princess royal and her infant brother had been left under the care of the Dowager Lady Lyttelton, their preceptress. The ladies and gentlemen in attendance were the Duchess of Norfolk, the Hon. Matilda Paget, Major-general Wemyss, equerry to the Queen, Colonel Bouverie, equerry to Prince Albert, Mr. George Edward Anson, the Prince's secretary, and Sir James Clark, her Majesty's

physician. The lord-steward (the Earl of Liverpool) had already started from Slough by a special train as early as three o'clock.

In thinking of this first visit of her Majesty to Scotland the first and most remarkable feature that presents itself to the mind is the extraordinary change that has come to pass in the manner of making the journey. To-day we read of the Queen starting from the Isle of Wight in the forenoon, comfortably reaching Perth to breakfast on the following morning, and dining the same evening in her own castle at Balmoral, having with her suite made the journey in sumptuously-fitted saloon carriages over lines of railway which can be brought into conjunction without inconvenience or delay. On her first excursion the railway journey of her Majesty, Prince Albert, and the suite was to Paddington, whence carriages conveyed them by Vauxhall Bridge to Woolwich amidst the loyal but scattered cheers of the few early risers who were in the streets. In the smaller chronicles of the time it was recorded that the Queen was attired in a blue silk dress, a white silk bonnet, and a Paisley shawl; and Prince Albert in military cloak and travelling cap.

At Woolwich there was a great reception of the royal party by naval and military officers, the cadets occupying a platform with the ladies of the principal officers. Marines and troops were ready to take up their stations on the route to the stairs where her Majesty was to embark on the admiralty barge, to be rowed to the royal yacht, the *Royal George*, on board which Captain and Commodore Lord Adolphus Fitzclarence was in command and awaiting her Majesty at the companion-ladder by which she was to reach the deck.

The chief officers of the household and lords in waiting had



arrived, and there also was the Duke of Cambridge in field-marshal's uniform. He had driven to Woolwich in a carriage and four to say "good-bye and a happy voyage" to his niece, who kissed him with sincere affection in returning his kindly greetings.

Along a course marked on either hand by men-of-war boats the royal barge, steered by Sir Francis Collier, conveyed the Queen and her Consort to the royal yacht amidst the cheers of crowds of people on shore and numbers who occupied the various craft, all of which were flying their gayest bunting. Six steam vessels formed the royal squadron and on board two of these her Majesty's suite was to embark. Directly the Queen reached the deck of the royal yacht the vessel was taken in tow by a steamer to a point opposite the arsenal, and—amidst the firing of artillery, the shouts and cheering of the assembled crowd and the seamen who manned the yards of every vessel in sight, while the troops of the arsenal lined the side of the river and presented arms—the *Royal George* with the squadron following, each ship in order of seniority of their commanders, made for Gravesend. The *Lightning* steamer went on in front, followed by the tow vessels, and the Waterman's Company's steamer and an above-bridge boat named the *Matrimony* brought up the rear as volunteers with crews whose loyalty was a little officious not to say troublesome, a quality which was soon still more conspicuous on the part of other river steamers carrying passengers, who followed the royal yacht rather too closely when nearing the mouth of the Medway.

At Gravesend and at Tilbury the extent of the green shores, the expanse of water, and the crowds of pleasure-boats and yachts decorated with flags and streamers had been so cheerful and attractive that the Queen and the Prince had seats brought

from the cabin, and her Majesty remained on deck for a long time at each place, acknowledging the cheers and salutes of the people on board the various craft, the sounds of shouting and the national anthem mingling strangely with that of church bells being rung on shore, and the booming of the guns of the fort.

At the Nore the scene was extremely imposing, for there, with a smooth sea but a fresh breeze, the various little vessels danced gaily in the now brightening sunshine as the royal flotilla swept on; and at the mouth of the Medway, from the forts at Sheerness, the vast hulls of men-of-war, and the great guardship at a little distance, there was a series of signalling. The flagship *Camperdown* and two smaller vessels of war towered on high and loomed large with yards manned, every rope and spar in its place, and flags and pennants standing out in the brisk breeze. The ports of the huge hulls flashed flame, and the thunder of their saluting guns shook air and sea; a responsive low roar coming from the distant guardship, and then the clamours of cheering, the sound of a multitude shouting and waving hats, flags, and handkerchiefs.

Thus the *Royal George*, with Queen and Prince on the deck, passed the Nore before noon, and as the afternoon wore on, steamers from different parts of the coast came out, and at sight of the Sovereign and the Prince those on board burst into rounds of cheering and received the royal bow and smile, or a gracious wave of the hand, and so departed. Past the Maplin Light and Walton-on-the-Naze, and so by the low, flat Essex shore to Harwich, where there were more steamers with bands of music, and the mayor and corporation of the old seaport town on board, and a line of revenue cruisers with ladies and children on deck fluttering white handkerchiefs, and then by Aldborough, whence other steamers and yawls came

out to give a passing cheer that continued till it was lost in the distance, and the autumn sunlight faded on the sea as the royal recipients of so much loyalty went below, the vessel ploughing onward towards the lights of Lowestofft, and passing at midnight round the eastern end of England by the back of Yarmouth Sands—a blue port-fire or a rocket showing now and then the position of the squadron.

The morning dawned brightly before Cromer came in sight, and after breakfast the Queen ordered a message to be signalled to the other vessels, saying that she and the Prince were perfectly well, and inquiring after the ladies who were on board the *Black Eagle* and the gentlemen on board the *Rhadamanthus.* The replies reported "all well," with the addition in the latter case, "and the lord high-steward eating voraciously." As the second evening drew on, the weather changed, the wind was adverse, and during the night the straining of the towing-steamers, as they pitched and tossed, greatly increased the motion of the royal yacht. Scarborough was passed, but the progress was very slow, much to the distress of the Queen, who, though usually a good sailor, was now very unwell, and could not remain on deck in the evening. Matters improved in the morning, when, at about eight o'clock, the squadron stood in towards land, within a good view of Tynemouth with its ruined castle and priory, and thence kept a course not far from the coast, where the people of the fishing villages were eagerly on the look-out. After leaving Dunstanborough the squadron went on a rapid tide through the narrow passage between the Farn or Ferne Islands and the main, with Bamborough Castle on the left, 150 feet above the sea. From her cabin the Queen saw the Ferne Islands and the outer rocks with the third of the lighthouses—Grace Darling's lighthouse; but it was not then

known to her Majesty that the heroine herself lay dying. Rocky Islands and the famous Lindisfarne or Holy Island were passed on the Northumbrian coast, and at half-past five in the evening her Majesty was able to go on deck and lie down on the sofa which had been placed there, that she might see the approaching coast of Scotland, contrasting with that of England by its wild, dark, and rocky aspect. St. Abb's Head was passed at half-past six, and numbers of fishing-boats, in one of which a piper was "discoursing sweet music," went out to meet the royal yacht; while two steamers also appeared, their decks filled with well-dressed passengers who had come to see the Queen on Britain's native element. One of these vessels, a large steamer called the *Monarch*, was cleverly steered in a direction that brought her at a respectful but not a long distance off the royal yacht, and a salute was fired, after which she rounded again, and the Queen and Prince, now standing on deck, could hear the music of a band and see that some people on board were dancing a reel. Her Majesty had risen to acknowledge the repeated acclamations and sustained bursts of cheering that resounded on all sides; and she was now so much better that, the sounds of music on the steamer having suggested it, the crew of the royal yacht had permission to dance. A sailor boy who could play the fiddle at once tuned up, and the tars began to foot it in true nautical style, one of them dancing a hornpipe with a vehement and untiring agility which ended in a race betwen the musician and the dancer, in which toes beat fingers, as the violinist had at last to wind up with a final chord. Then followed a fo'c'sle concert, the men joining in "Hearts of Oak" and other good old sea songs and choruses, their deep voices harmonizing well with the plash of the waves and the surrounding scene; while their loyalty was manifested by the

intensity of energy and expression with which they performed the national anthem as a finale to their entertainment.

The Queen had been expected at Leith that morning, and all the arrangements had been made for her reception after landing at Granton Pier, and for a royal procession through Edinburgh, where the lord-provost and the council were to hand to her Majesty the keys of the city. Stands for spectators had been erected at various points, the lord-provost and his colleagues sat all day in readiness; the Royal Archers body-guard had mustered that they might take their traditional place beside the royal carriage, attired in their green tunics, and feathered caps, and with bows in hands and arrows in belts. Troops were at the castle drawn up in readiness to take position there and at various points in the city; members of learned societies and ancient institutions, with distinctive badges and insignia, were at their posts, school children were placed at the points where they were to greet the sovereign with songs and cheering; and the streets and heights, not only in the city, but by the landing-place at Granton, were filled with a patient and decorous crowd, numbers of whom had come from distant places or from Glasgow by the recently completed railway between Glasgow and Edinburgh. Conspicuous among the people were knots of fisherfolk, the women bravely dressed with new snow-white caps adorned with many-coloured ribbons, and with petticoats of yellow, blue, or scarlet. All was ready, everybody was on the tiptoe of expectation, and yet the Queen came not, nor could any sign of her approach be discerned by those who, standing on the heights, gazed wistfully out to sea. The day drew on and it became evident that the royal yacht and the attendant squadron would not reach their destination till too late in the evening for her Majesty to make a procession through the city. There was

much disappointment but no ill-humour on the part of the loyal people who had assembled in thousands to welcome the sovereign; and when the steamer *Lightning* having on board Prince Albert's *jäger* Benda, and the two dogs Eôs and Cairnach, arrived at Leith as avant-courier to say that the weather at sea had retarded the voyage and that the Queen could not arrive till the following morning, there was nothing for it but to wait patiently and make the best possible arrangements for the morrow. But there was still one grand demonstration of welcome to be made when it was known that the squadron was approaching and was in the Forth at nightfall.

The Queen and the Prince remained on deck till late in the evening, and the spectacle was worth staying for. Lanterns were hoisted at different points of the yacht's masts, and blue lights and rockets were discharged, so that the people on shore could see them as signals, and as the darkness came down upon the rugged coast and hid it from view the squadron neared Dunbar, which had already been brilliantly illuminated; two guns mounted on the old castle fired a salute, which was answered by flights of rockets from the squadron, while from the beacon heights for fifty miles round blazed great bonfires, those that were nearest lighting with a ruddy glare the waters of the firth. Largest of all flamed a mighty mound built upon the head of the lion-shaped mass of Arthur's Seat above the Scottish capital—a mound 40 feet in diameter at its base, and composed of 25 tons of coal, 40 cart-loads of wood, 180 barrels of tar, besides barrels of turpentine and rosin, with quantities of tarred rope and canvas. This enormous bonfire could be seen from afar, looking like the outbursts of a volcano as the flames shot upward or curled hither and thither on the wind, and the great column of smoke that arose above the pile took changing hues

from the fiery mass. Even at distant places the beacon fires flared, and the people at Fort William, away in Inverness-shire, had earned a title to loyalty by laboriously, but cheerfully, carrying an enormous quantity of fuel and numerous tar barrels to the summit of Ben Nevis, whence the red glare was reflected on the tops of surrounding mountains. The spectacle of the great bonfire on the height and of the splendid illumination of the city was sufficient to keep numbers of people out all night in Edinburgh, and, indeed, so great was the concourse of persons who had come from all parts of the country that many must have been unable to obtain sleeping accommodation.

At a quarter to one in the morning the royal yacht anchored at Inchkeith, and at Granton pier the Duke of Buccleuch, who was to receive her Majesty as his guest at Dalkeith House, kept careful watch and made every preparation for her landing, having ordered couriers to convey to him the intelligence of the first appearance of the squadron.

The good people at Edinburgh had not given her Majesty credit for a habit of early rising which she usually observed when away from the more artificial life of the court and its nightly entertainments. At seven o'clock in the morning the Queen and the Prince were on deck and ready for breakfast. On one side of the royal yacht was Leith and the hills towering above the mist that obscured Edinburgh, on the other side was to be seen the distant Isle of May, and in the rear the Bass Rock. As the mist lifted, the grand panorama was unfolded to view, and the royal visitors, to whom all was new, displayed great interest in the various features that were most conspicuous in the scene. But who could have expected that her Majesty would be ready to disembark and to land at Granton pier a few minutes after eight! The Duke of Buccleuch,

who had made all arrangements for the royal reception, was at Granton all night, and at three in the morning was joined there by Sir Robert Peel, who had preceded her Majesty to Scotland. At five o'clock the duke had had an interview with Bailie Richardson and with Sir Niel Douglas, commander of the forces; despatches had been sent off to the public authorities at Edinburgh, for Sir James Forrest, Bart., the lord-provost, and the council were waiting robed and ready in the council-room, where it was said some of the officials had passed the night. Two guns were to be fired at the castle and a flag was to be hoisted as a signal of her Majesty's approach; but in the council and in the city some misconception arose, and the signal that was originally supposed to indicate the arrival of the royal yacht at the mouth of the firth now meant that the Queen was actually on *terra firma*. Who could have foreseen that not very long after the interviews at Granton with the Duke of Buccleuch, Lord Liverpool and the suite actually came on shore with the message that her Majesty would land in the course of an hour or so! It was only ten minutes past eight when the royal yacht arrived at Granton pier, and the Duke of Buccleuch, Sir Robert Peel, and others went on board. The Queen and the Prince then crossed the gangway to the pier, where the suite had already assembled and the royal carriages were waiting. Her Majesty and Prince Albert entered an open barouche, the ladies and gentlemen following, and the duke, the equerries, and Mr. Anson riding.

The concourse at Leith was tremendous, and as the royal party moved onward it was evident to people in front that crowds were coming down from Edinburgh, intending to wait for the arrival of her Majesty. There were already a few messengers who were running far in advance of the royal

carriage in an endeavour to carry the tidings of her arrival to the city; and as they saw the coming crowd they could only wave their hands and shout "The Queen! the Queen!" In a few moments, however, the scarlet uniforms of the guards escort were seen coming up the road, and numbers among the multitude thereupon turned and began to scamper back in the expectation of arriving at some better position in Edinburgh, or of reaching the barrier, formed by a line of palisades and a gate in the centre of the city at the head of Brandon Street, where it was understood that the lord-provost and the council would deliver up the keys. This ceremony was not performed, for the simple reason that it was not till her Majesty had already passed through a part of the city that the startling intelligence of her arrival reached the civic dignitaries in their council chamber, who thereupon made a rush for their carriages and began a race pell-mell in the endeavour by short cuts and by-ways to get beyond the royal procession, or to join it at some point where they could place themselves in evidence. This was only effected by a few, including the lord-provost, who, however, could do no more than await her Majesty as she emerged from the city and was on her way to Dalkeith.

The Royal Archers had contrived to assemble in haste near the Canonmills Bridge, and there endeavoured to fall in on either side of the Queen's carriage according to their privilege and duty, but encountered some serious opposition from the dragoons of the escort, who were ignorant of the fact that these men in green with the caps and plumes, who persisted in breaking through that they might walk near the Queen, were Scottish noblemen, who gallantly persisted and kept their places even when the cortege went at a pace which must have been very trying, and who, by dint of physical strength no less than by

moral and social influence, bore back the fervid crowd that surged on either side the royal carriage, and placed both it and themselves in danger. On the Queen's side were the Duke of Roxburgh, and Lord Elcho, who was at that time not personally known to her Majesty, and who pointed out to her the various buildings and objects of interest and answered the inquiries which she continued to put to him. Sir John Hope was on Prince Albert's side of the carriage, and the Prince thanked them all heartily, for he was really somewhat alarmed lest the multitude should press completely on to the royal equipage. The Queen, however, was, if we may be permitted to say so, in her element; she understood and thoroughly appreciated the popular enthusiasm, and could enjoy the "humours" of the scene as well as the magnificent spectacle presented by the modern Athens, occupied at every point of vantage by a vast assembly of eager and animated people.

Readers of the Queen's brief account of what may be called her first triumphal entry into Edinburgh will note with what observant eyes her Majesty regarded surrounding objects, and the differences and peculiarities among the people, even at the time that she was in the midst of an excited and demonstrative crowd, whose almost frantic greetings she had to return with good-humoured self-possession. The stone cottages and stone walls of the suburb beyond Edinburgh engaged her attention no less than the imposing aspect of the High Street and the magnificent buildings of which Arthur's Seat is the background; and the peculiar aspect of the old women in their close caps or *mutches,* the bare-footed girls and children with loose and flowing hair, the quaint picturesqueness of the fisherfolk, all attracted her notice, and at later stages of the Scotch tour a few words in her journal indicate a remarkable power of indivi-

dualizing every person she saw, and by simple comparison or illustration of fixing not on her own memory alone, but on the imagination of others, her impressions of people, scenery, and natural objects. It may be mentioned too that during this brief journey in Scotland the loyalty shown to the royal guests by the noblemen who received them was not officious or oppressive. Magnificent hospitality accompanied with some appropriate display of Highland customs and the presence of numerous picturesque retainers did not prevent the Queen and Prince Albert from having time at their disposal for quiet drives or walks amidst delightful scenery and free from harassing ceremonious attentions, and these restful intervals were relieved by festivities in which the royal visitors could participate not only as guests, but as amused spectators.

The first progress from Leith through Edinburgh was quickly accomplished, and after a passing glance at Craigmillar Castle Dalkeith was reached at eleven o'clock. At the door of the fine triple-fronted mansion of reddish stone the Duchess of Buccleuch arrived immediately after her royal guests. They had alighted, tired and giddy, and were glad to enjoy two or three hours of repose after the morning's excitement,—and a quiet drive in the extensive and beautiful park, with its views of Arthur's Seat and the Pentland Hills, before the large dinner-party at eight o'clock. On the following day, after breakfast, at which the Queen tasted the oatmeal porridge and pronounced it to be very good, and some "finnan haddies," on which she has recorded no expression of opinion, there was a pleasant walk by the Esk, followed by a drive through Dalkeith amidst a crowd of people running and cheering, and a return home through a Scotch mist by way of Lasswade and Lord Melville's Park. The next day (Saturday, September 3d) was to be chiefly

devoted to a more complete state procession through Edinburgh, to which her Majesty had consented in order to compensate the loyal people who had been disappointed because of the previous misunderstanding as to the hour of her Majesty's arrival at Granton pier. Accordingly, at ten o'clock the royal procession was formed for entering the Scottish capital from the other side by Arthur's Seat, where a vast crowd had already assembled, and the Royal Archer guard, consisting entirely of noblemen and gentlemen, was in readiness to form a walking escort, with the same arduous duties to perform in resisting the pressure of the crowd around the royal carriage, which at some parts became so really serious that the Queen herself was alarmed for the safety of her loyal body-guard, who, however, proved their privilege right manfully.

Past Holyrood Chapel and Palace, which her Majesty did not visit on this occasion, as there had been some severe cases of fever in the immediate vicinity, the procession passed through the old town and into the High Street, the aspect of which was most striking, the windows of the towering houses on either side of the broad thoroughfare being crammed with loyal sight-seers, some of whose excited gestures made each vast building appear to be alive from roof to basement; while the thunderous roar of thousands of voices was so exceedingly impressive that the whole demonstration astonished her Majesty. At the barrier the lord-provost and the council were all ready to present the keys and a loyal address, to which the Queen replied to the effect that she knew she could do no better than return the said keys to the faithful and loyal gentlemen in whose hands they would remain in safe-keeping. The girls of the Orphan Asylum and the representatives of the guilds in traditional attire occupied platforms close by, and various societies with their insignia, including the

Celtic Society, the members of which were in costume and saluted the sovereign in ancient style with their claymores, gave life and colour to the scene. At the castle the Queen alighted, and with the Prince walked up the steep ascent, though the way had been laid with tan to enable carriages to be driven. Having examined all the interesting objects there, including the ancient and curious regalia of Scotland, and having stayed for a short time in the very small room where James the Sixth of Scotland and First of England was born, and on the wall of which is inscribed a strange prayer for the child that was about to be ushered into the world, the Queen and Prince enjoyed for a few minutes the extensive views from the batteries, and, amidst the strains of military bands, re-entered their carriage and completed their royal progress, the members of council rejoining the procession and the Royal Archer guard resuming their duties. One accident of a serious kind occurred during the day, caused by the endeavour of a number of people to take possession of seats on a platform where no places were provided for them, and for accommodation on which, those occupying it had previously paid. The platform gave way, and two persons were killed and several more or less seriously injured.

The Queen and the royal party drove on to Dalmeny, the beautiful house and park of Lord Rosebery, where they arrived to luncheon at two o'clock, and at six returned to Dalkeith through Leith, which, her Majesty declares, is not a pretty town, though the view of Edinburgh from the road before you enter it is "enchanting, and what you would only imagine as a thing to dream of or to see in a picture."

The next day (Sunday) was passed quietly, a private walk occupying part of the morning, and a drive by the romantic borders of the Esk to Lord Lothian's at Newbattle, and to

Dalhousie, the evening. At noon, divine service was conducted in the house by Mr. Ramsay (afterwards Dean Ramsay, so well known by his anecdotes of Scottish life), of St. John's Episcopal Church; and this gave rise to some discussion in the newspapers on the part of people who seemed to think that her Majesty should have attended the parish church of Scotland, as Sir Robert Peel, the Earl of Liverpool, and the Earl of Aberdeen did. On the Monday there was a great "drawing-room" at Dalkeith House, in the gallery, and the presentations were very numerous. Before the assembly the Queen and Prince Albert received addresses from the Scottish universities, from the lord-provost and magistrates of Edinburgh, and from the Scotch Church. In replying to the latter, her Majesty said: "I acknowledge with gratitude the inestimable advantages which have been derived from the ministrations of the Church of Scotland. They have contributed in an eminent degree to form the character of a loyal and religious people."

On the Tuesday began what proved to be a truly delightful journey, arrangements for which were so excellently made that the royal travellers were able to take a late luncheon at Lord Kinnoull's house at Dupplin, where a battalion of Highlanders was drawn up, and there her Majesty received addresses from the chief inhabitants of the county and from the provost and magistrates of Perth, where they arrived the same afternoon, to find the town decked with triumphal arches, an immense and enthusiastic crowd in the streets, and the magistrates waiting to give up the keys to the Queen and to present the Prince with the freedom of the city. The royal party then went on to Scone, to the house of Lord Mansfield, who, with the dowager Lady Mansfield, was standing at the door to welcome them. The next day's journey was through the lovely scenery to

Dunkeld, where there was a grand reception by Lord Glenlyon's Highlanders, who were encamped there. Several of the nobility of Scotland were among the guests at the luncheon provided in a tent, with the pipes playing and the sword-dance and the reel being performed for the amusement of her Majesty, who, however, was much distressed by the knowledge that Lord Glenlyon, who received her, had recently and suddenly become blind and was led about by his wife. Escorted by the Highland guard, the royal carriages then left for Taymouth, where Lord Breadalbane was prepared to entertain his Sovereign in princely style in his magnificent new abode, a house which the Queen describes as a kind of castle built of granite.

Amidst the glorious wooded hills the scene presented by the Queen's reception was indescribable. Highlanders in the Campbell tartan, with a few of the Menzies men in red and white, and Lord Breadalbane himself in Highland dress, were drawn up in front of the house. The pipers were playing at full blast, guns were firing, the crowd was cheering vociferously. "It seemed," says the Queen, "as if a great chieftain in olden feudal times was receiving his sovereign. It was princely and romantic. Lord and Lady Breadalbane took us up stairs, the hall and stairs being lined with Highlanders. The Gothic staircase is of stone and very fine; the whole house is newly and exquisitely furnished. The drawing-room especially is splendid." At eight o'clock dinner was served to a distinguished party assembled in honour of the Queen and the Prince. The dining-room—a fine Gothic room—and the royal apartments had never previously been occupied. In the evening the grounds were splendidly illuminated, and bonfires gleamed on the surrounding hills; reels and other dances performed to the music of the pipes by torch-light in front of the house brought the entertainment to a close.

During their stay till the Saturday the Queen and the Prince made several delightful excursions and walked a good deal; and the Prince had all the pleasures of deer-stalking, in which he proved himself to be a very good shot and displayed remarkable activity. There was also a battue for his especial benefit, but probably less to his liking, in which he did considerable execution, and a rather imposing quantity of game fell to his gun. Altogether the stay at Taymouth was full of enjoyment, and the row of 16 miles up Loch Tay to Auchmore, the magnificent scenery on both sides, the Gaelic songs of the boatmen, the mellowed skirr of the pipes played by two pipers in the bow of the boat which carried her Majesty and Prince Albert, Lord Breadalbane, the Duchess of Buccleuch, and the Duchess of Norfolk, made an experience never to be forgotten. Then came a continuation of the tour, through wilder country by Glen Ogle to Lochearnhead, where horses were changed and Lord Breadalbane, who had accompanied the royal party to that distance, said farewell as they went onward toward Crieff and thence to Drummond Castle, where Lord and Lady Willoughby were waiting to receive them.

Here they stayed till the following Tuesday morning. There were walks in the fine terraced garden, and on Monday pleasant excursions, more deer-stalking, agreeable company at dinner, and a dance in the evening. On the Tuesday, September 13th, an early start was made on the return journey (sixty-five miles), and Dalkeith was reached at half-past five in the evening. The whole tour had been preformed with admirable punctuality and with considerable rapidity with the smallest possible appearance of hurry, and only once had a few minutes' delay occurred. As many as 656 horses had been employed in conveying her Majesty and the suite. The Queen was much fatigued, and the

following day was chiefly devoted to strolls in the park or garden, and to rest and a drive to Rosslyn and Hawthornden.

At eight o'clock on the morning of Thursday her Majesty and the Prince again passed through Edinburgh, accompanied by the Duke and Duchess of Buccleuch and other noblemen and ladies. They reached the pier at Granton amidst an orderly but strikingly loyal assembly in the streets, and having expressed hearty thanks to their entertainers of Dalkeith, and taken leave of those who had attended them to the pier, embarked on board the large and commodious steam-ship *Trident* for the homeward voyage, arriving at the Nore at three o'clock on the morning of Saturday the 17th of September, and at Windsor Castle at half-past twelve.

The enthusiasm of the multitude assembled to see her Majesty embark had been the more genuine for a touch of sorrow in parting with the sovereign; and the presence of numbers of fishing boats, occupied by the women whose picturesque dresses and bright healthy faces had so often been noticed by the Queen, gave a picturesque effect to the scene, as they joined in singing a song of loyal admiration, composed for the occasion by some local poet.

The journey had been not only memorable but full of unalloyed pleasure, and the change of scene, daily exercise, and pure mountain air had greatly benefited both her Majesty and Prince Albert. A letter addressed by Lord Aberdeen to the lord-advocate said, "The Queen will leave Scotland with a feeling of regret that her visit on the present occasion could not be further prolonged. Her Majesty fully expected to witness the loyalty and attachment of her Scottish subjects; but the devotion and enthusiasm evinced in every quarter, and by all ranks, have produced an impression on the mind of her

Majesty, which can never be effaced." Doubtless the Queen's enjoyment of the romantic scenery, the customs, and character of the people, and the boundless hospitality of her reception, was enhanced by the knowledge that her husband was no less delighted with the holiday. "The country is full of beauty, of a severe and grand character," he wrote to the Duchess of Saxe-Gotha; "perfect for sport of all kinds, and the air remarkably pure and light in comparison with what we have here. The people are more natural, and marked by that honesty and sympathy which always distinguish the inhabitants of mountainous countries who live far away from towns. There is, moreover, no country where historical traditions are preserved with such fidelity or to the same extent. Every spot is connected with some interesting historical fact, and with most of these Sir Walter Scott's accurate descriptions have made us familiar."

After resuming for a short time their ordinary domestic life at Windsor, the Queen and Prince Albert accepted the invitation of the Duke of Wellington, who had placed Walmer Castle at their disposal, and on the 10th of November they took up their residence there for three weeks, during which they went for many pleasant walks and drives in the neighbourhood. It was here that her Majesty received the happy intelligence that some of the causes of recent anxiety had been removed. The Afghan war was at an end. It could not be said that any good had been effected or advantage gained by the mistaken occupation of Cabul. The conditions that existed before our interference and the destruction of our army of occupation, were resumed; but British arms had again been triumphant, and, to use the phrase common on such occasions, British honour had been vindicated. Lord Ellenborough, a man of eminent

ability, but distinguished by a singularly inflated style of oratory and by florid proclamations which he doubtless devised to have much effect on the populations of India, had succeeded Lord Auckland as governor-general; but before the close of his administration the latter had appointed General Pollock to command an expeditionary army which was to punish the Afghans and retrieve recent disasters by forcing the Khyber Pass and relieving General Sale at Jellalabad. Pollock had been a distinguished officer in the East India Company's service and had fought under Lake and Wellington, and after many difficulties he organized a force of troops by the help of reinforcements and advanced from Peshawur,—forcing the pass by adopting the tactics of the Afghans,—and reached Jellalabad, where Sale's brigade had for five months desperately held a position against repeated attacks of the enemy. The meeting of the besieged force and the relieving army was "a sight worth seeing;" and as Lord Ellenborough had but recently arrived in India and did not clearly know what to do—as Shah Sujah had been murdered and Dost Mohammed was awaiting events—the military commanders, Outram, Pollock, and Nott, had to decide on action, and agreed to a forward movement, to which the governor-general consented. General Nott having been relieved at Candahar was to make his way back to India proper by way of Ghuznee and Cabul; while General Pollock with about 8000 men started from Jellalabad for the Khoord Cabul Pass, which he forced in the same way as at the Khyber. Akbar Khan then brought 16,000 men to oppose the further advance, but Sale, leading the first column of the British force, a battle was fought almost hand to hand, and the Afghan army was routed. Akbar fled, and our army marched to Cabul, which, with Ghuznee, where General Nott's force arrived a day or two afterwards, was to a great

extent destroyed, the citadel at Cabul as well as considerable portions of the ancient city being blown up, while from Ghuznee the "great gates of the temple of Somnauth"—those sandalwood gates which had been carried off by the sultan Mahmoud eight hundred years before and had formed the entrance to his tomb—were, by command of Lord Ellenborough, conveyed back to India, an event which, added to his florid proclamation of the event to the people of Hindustan, was held to have been injudicious and inexpedient as tending to arouse hatred and to offend the Mahometans. The recapture of the Afghan capital had a great effect on the tribes, but the hostages—all the women and others to whom Akbar Khan had promised a safe-conduct—were still prisoners, and had to be released. Akbar had sent them off from Cabul under the charge of an emissary named Saleh Mohammed, who had been told to convey them to Turkestan and sell them as slaves; but Laurence and Pottinger, who were with them, offered him a larger bribe for their freedom than he would have received for carrying out his orders. Elphinstone had died, and, after having suffered months of privation and terror, Lady Sale and most of her companions in captivity entered the camp of her husband the general, wan and weak and still suffering, but cheered by the wild cheers of welcome and the salute of the guns. Lady Sale brought with her Mrs. Sturt, her widowed daughter, and the infant to which that lady had given birth during the captivity, and this aroused to a still greater pitch the enthusiasm of the men. It is easy to understand how greatly the Queen was affected when, after the arrival of Lady Sale in England, she went to visit her sovereign and narrated the story of Cabul, the Khyber Pass, and the war in Afghanistan.

Peace had been concluded with China, as we have seen, and

the terms included not only the large indemnity, of which a humorous song of the period said that the Chinese would "tax our tea to pay it," but also a favourable tariff and an open trade with five of the principal Chinese ports.

All this good news reached her Majesty at Walmer on the 23d of November, and with a generous desire to mark her sense, and the sense of the country, of the value of the services performed by those chiefly concerned, letters patent were immediately issued, by which distinctions were conferred on some of the officers, while directions were given in which her Majesty expressed her wish that Chinese and Afghan medals should be at once struck and distributed. It transpired, however, that the grandiose Lord Ellenborough had already, without instructions and on his own responsibility, issued medals to the army in India, so that only the Chinese decoration could be issued by the Queen.

The year 1843 may be said to have opened with a tragic occurrence which had a great effect not only on her Majesty and Prince Albert but on persons of all ranks, since it was inevitably associated with that intense excitement which at the time pervaded the country in relation to stagnation of commerce and to that public distress which formed the chief argument for those who urged repeal of the taxes which increased the cost of necessaries of life. On the 20th of January, Mr. Drummond, the secretary of Sir Robert Peel, was shot while entering the official residence of the prime-minister, and died shortly afterwards. The evidence showed without doubt that the assassin, whose name was Daniel M'Naughten, intended the fatal bullet for Sir Robert Peel himself. He was committed for trial for wilful murder, and the jury found a verdict of not guilty on the ground of insanity, a conclusion which can seldom be deemed satisfactory

though it may enable a jury to escape from a difficulty. The Queen had for some time before seen the inconsequent effect of these verdicts, and in writing to her uncle in reference to Mr. Drummond's murder had said: "I trust it will have the beneficial effect of making people feel the difference between complete madness, which deprives a man of *all* sense, and madness which does *not* prevent a man from knowing right from wrong."

Prince Albert was much concerned at the intended attempt on the life of the premier, for whom he entertained a very true regard because of his sincerity and independence of purpose. The Prince was himself now greatly occupied in politics, and his undoubted ability as an adviser of the Queen was encouraged by the complete confidence which ministers and, indeed, leaders on both sides placed in his judgment and integrity. It was even at this time within the contemplation of the ministry to offer to appoint him to be commander-in-chief in the event of the death of the Duke of Wellington; but he strongly discouraged any such proposal, on much the same ground as that which he assumed at a later date (in 1850), when the Duke himself brought the matter forward, and found that the Prince was entirely opposed to it. We have seen what were his objections, and that they were thoroughly consistent with the course which he had prescribed for himself from the time of his betrothal to the Queen. Devotion to her and to the interests of the crown and the country of his adoption had been his guiding principle, and he would refuse any honour or advantage that he believed would interfere with it.

It is pretty certain that some of the very few who appeared to be inimical to him were people whose interests were affected by the scheme of reformation in the royal household to which he had now begun gradually to give effect.

He had reason to believe in the good feeling of the public, but the continued effort to avoid anything that could give occasion to misrepresentation must have operated in maintaining a certain reserve that may frequently have been mistaken for coldness and hauteur. No breath of scandal had reached him from any quarter where it would have been regarded as worth a moment's attention, and he was ready to sacrifice even that personal liberty claimed by every other English gentleman, that there might be no shadow of a foundation even for lying insinuations. He relinquished, or rather he never exercised, even the ordinary freedom which would have enabled him to visit various parts of the metropolis without being known, that he might watch the improvements that were being made, and become more immediately acquainted with the habits and manners of the people. "Wherever he went, whether in a carriage or on horseback, he was accompanied by his equerry. He paid no visits in general society. His visits were to the studio of the artist, to museums of art or science, to institutions for good and benevolent purposes. Wherever a visit from him, or his presence, could tend to advance the real good of the people, there his horses might be seen waiting; never at the door of mere fashion. Scandal itself could take no liberty with his name. He loved to ride through all the districts of London where building and improvements were in progress, more especially when they were such as would conduce to the health or recreation of the working-classes; and few, if any, knew so well or took such interest as he did in all that was being done, at any distance east, west, north, or south of the great city."[1] . . . "He would frequently return," the Queen says, "to luncheon at a great pace, and would always come through the Queen's

[1] *Life of the Prince Consort.*

dressing-room, where she generally was at that time, with that bright loving smile with which he ever greeted her; telling her where he had been—what new buildings he had seen—what studios, &c., he had visited."[1]

The Queen had for the first time been unable personally to open parliament, which met on the 2d of February, 1843; and on the 25th of April the birth of another princess was the occasion of general congratulations. The baby princess was christened on the 2d of June, one of the sponsors being the King of Hanover, who was probably coming over for the marriage of the Princess Augusta, eldest daughter of the Duke of Cambridge, to the hereditary Grand-duke of Mecklenburg-Strelitz, which took place on the 28th. The Hanoverian sovereign arrived too late for the baptismal ceremony; and perhaps nobody particularly regretted his absence, for Prince Ernest, the Princess Sophia Matilda, and the Princess Feodora were there, and the occasion was not only a brilliant, but an agreeable one, the babe receiving the names of Alice Maud Mary, the latter after her great-aunt, the Duchess of Gloucester, the two former because they were good old English names. By the first of these the memory of the princess has become enshrined in the hearts of the British people, to whom the "Princess Alice" was in after years to represent a tender and devoted daughter, wife, and mother, faithful and self-sacrificing even to death.

The mention of the King of Hanover as a wedding guest can scarcely be passed by without a reference to a renewed attempt to assert his prerogative, which led to an amusing incident. The marriage took place on the 28th of June in the new Chapel Royal at Buckingham Palace, in the presence of the Queen and Prince Albert and the King and Queen of the

[1] *Early Years of the Prince Consort.*

Belgians, as well as that of those members of the royal family who could attend. When the ceremony was completed and the signatures were to be placed on the register-book, the King of Hanover was evidently manœuvring so that he might sign next to the Queen and before Prince Albert; but her Majesty knew what he was about, and just as the archbishop handed her the pen she quietly slipped to the other side of the table, where the Prince was standing, and having written her name handed the pen to him that he might sign immediately after her.

Perhaps the Queen saw some intentional discourtesy in the arrival of the King of Hanover too late for the christening, and as there was little abatement of his former inimical attitude, this may have increased the desire of her Majesty to give precedence at court to King Leopold. She consulted the Duke of Wellington how this was to be done, and the old warrior, stickler as he was for etiquette, at once solved the difficulty, even without reverting to the declaration that the Queen could do as she pleased. He told her Majesty that he supposed it should be settled as they had done at the Congress of Vienna. "How was that?" asked the Queen; "by the first arrival?" "No, madam," replied the Duke, "alphabetically; and then, you know, B comes before H." And that was the plan adopted, much to her Majesty's satisfaction. The presence of the man who had made little secret of his animosity towards both Prince Albert and Leopold, and had spared no slander in his correspondence about them, was doubtless in itself enough to spoil such festivity as he took part in; but the amenities of royal society were of course preserved, and it is pretty certain that age, if not reflection, had somewhat toned down his almost savage asperities. At any rate he had given a pretty fair government to the Hanoverians, and had faithfully observed the promises that he made when he succeeded

to the throne; so that in a sense he was liked and respected by his subjects. His son, the blind prince, had been married in February to the Princess Mary of Saxe-Altenburg, and the wedding had been a magnificent one, a number of sovereigns and princes, among whom was the King of Prussia, being present at the ceremony.

One face and figure long familiar to the people of London had been missed at the baptism of the Princess Alice and the marriage of the daughter of the Duke of Cambridge. The Duke of Sussex had died on the 21st of April at Kensington Palace, at a time when the Queen was unable to visit him, as it was but four days before the birth of the princess. He had been for some time in infirm health, and was seventy years old, but up to a few months before his death had continued to be associated with various useful public movements, and was greatly respected by a large circle of friends, and continued to be popular on account of his benevolent sentiments and his generally liberal opinions. His body lay in state at the palace on the 3d of May, and any person attired in decent mourning was admitted. It is said that 25,000 persons visited the mortuary chamber during the day, and on the following morning, contrary to the custom in previous cases, which had prescribed midnight as the time for interment, the funeral took place, the tomb being at Kensal Green Cemetery instead of at Windsor. The funeral procession was more than a mile in length, including a great number of mourning coaches, each drawn by six black horses, and above fifty private carriages, in one of which was Sir Augustus d'Este, the son of the duke and Lady d'Ameland (Lady Augusta Murray), whose early marriage with the duke we have already noticed. That lady, whose position had not been recognized, as it was contrary to the Royal Marriage Act,

had died many years before, and the Duke of Sussex had contracted a second morganatic marriage with Lady Cecilia Buggin, daughter of the second Earl of Arran and widow of Sir George Buggin. She was created Duchess of Inverness, and survived the duke thirty years. The chief mourner at the duke's funeral was the Duke of Cambridge; but it was attended at the cemetery by Prince George of Cambridge; by the Grand-duke of Mecklenburg-Strelitz, whose son was about to be married to the Princess Augusta of Cambridge; and by Prince Albert, who, it was said, seemed to be more affected than any person present.

When the Queen was able to resume her place at the court Prince Albert, whose increasing duties and the signs of over-work which could occasionally be observed in his appearance gave her Majesty and some of her friends much anxiety, entered with zest and spirit into the business of the Royal Commission of the Fine Arts. An exhibition of designs for cartoons for decorating the new palace of the legislature was held in Westminster Hall, and prizes had been offered for those which should most appropriately illustrate English history and poetry. As many as 140 cartoons were sent in for competition, the sizes varying from ten to fifteen feet, and the great popularity of the exhibition, the number of persons of the labouring class who thronged the hall, and the interest which was expressed, greatly encouraged the Prince, who regarded it as a proof that a taste for art might soon be developed among the people, and would be the means of elevating their character and habits and of giving a higher aim to manufactures that were associated with the arts of design. There was a sixpenny catalogue containing the quotations from history or poetry to which the pictures referred, and the Prince abridged it so that an edition could be sold for a penny; but

to his delight he found that a very large proportion, even of the poorest among "the million," preferred the book with the quotations, and it was to him a very gratifying sight to witness the attention and earnestness with which they followed the subjects with the books in their hands. He represented to the commission "that these catalogues in the hands of so many thousands would be the first introduction of many to an acquaintance with our best poets and writers."

The Prince was strongly of opinion that the decoration of the walls of the new buildings with fresco paintings, the subjects of which would instruct and delight those who would be attracted by them, would be far better than mere ornamentation, and after considerable discussion his view was adopted. At the same time, further to encourage the art of fresco painting, he commissioned eight of our principal artists to prepare a series of eight lunettes for the decoration of the pavilion in the garden of Buckingham Palace, and Landseer, Maclise, Uwins, Eastlake, Leslie, Sir W. Ross, Dyce, and Stanfield were employed for some time in the work, the Prince and the Queen finding simple and genuine pleasure in watching its progress by visiting the pavilion daily, and often before ten in the morning, and conversing with the artists. Sometimes the visit would be repeated in the hour before dinner, after the duties of the day were over; and the royal children were frequently taken to see how the pictures in the summer-house were growing under the painters' hands.

Among the earnest efforts of Prince Albert at this time, in which the Queen took the strongest interest, was his endeavour to abolish duelling, a practice to which attention had been painfully directed by some instances which had aroused public feeling. The Prince had a notion that in the army and navy "affairs of honour" might be settled by being referred to courts of honour,

and he applied to the Duke of Wellington to become the head of such a tribunal; but the duke was not convinced of the efficacy of the proposed remedy, though he agreed to inquire into the operation of similar arbitraments in the Tribunal des Maréchaux in France and similar courts in the Bavarian army. Eventually the matter was taken into consideration by the cabinet, with the result, that though the establishment of courts of honour was thought to present too many practical difficulties, an amendment was made on the articles of war, which thereafter declared that it was "suitable to the character of honourable men to apologize and offer redress for wrong or insult committed, and equally so for the party aggrieved to accept frankly and cordially explanation and apologies for the same." The effect of this was very remarkable; and as at about the same time much ridicule was thrown upon the arbitration of the pistol by the circumstances attending duels between persons whose social position was thought to exclude them from the noble privilege of blowing each others' brains out, the "countercheck quarrelsome" really fell into something like contempt so far as the vindication of honour by sword or barrel was concerned.

The season had been a quiet one, trade and industry had improved, and the political suspicions which had slightly ruffled our relations with France having subsided, there was no obstacle to the fulfilment of the long-cherished wish of her Majesty to visit the royal family of France and make the personal acquaintance of the king, who had, when Duke of Orleans, been the intimate friend of her father and of King Leopold, and whose estimable queen and their sons and daughters could claim many ties of alliance and friendship with Prince Albert and herself.

The opportunity was favourable, for parliament was to be prorogued on the 27th of August. The French royal family

were at the king's Chateau d'Eu, near Trèport, only a few hours' sea-journey from Southampton, and her Majesty's new steam yacht, the *Victoria and Albert*, had been launched from Pembroke dockyard on the day that the Princess Alice was born, and was now completely ready for the trip.

The day after parliament rose the Queen and Prince Albert embarked at Southampton, and it would appear that their intention to visit France was known even to the members of the cabinet only a very short time before they left London, and then there seems to have been some uncertainty on the subject, even the Duke of Wellington not having been consulted until it was thought desirable to ask him whether there would be any necessity to appoint a regency during the absence of the Queen. The duke sought for precedents, with the result that he thought such an appointment must be made; but the crown-lawyers thought otherwise. At first, however, the journey consisted of a couple of days' cruise about the Isle of Wight and along the coast of Devon, and when this was extended to Cherbourg the suspicion was confirmed that there was something of secrecy in the proposed visit, and that either it had a political design or that the crafty Louis Philippe had anticipated some objection on the part of the ministry because other sovereigns of Europe had not by personal attention completely acknowledged him as a legitimate sovereign. Undoubtedly the extreme delight and satisfaction expressed by the king to his guests, and the "*effusion*" with which he greeted them, gave some strength to the conclusion that the friendship of the Queen of England was of importance to him.

At all events, the visit, though it only lasted five days, was a very delightful one, and the Queen was received right royally, and yet with a simple and, one may say, a genuine exhibition

of the most friendly regard. But there was an efficient, if not a sufficient, reason for suspecting a political motive on the part of a man like Louis Philippe, who was in his way an accomplished and crafty diplomatist. Among the causes of constraint between the two countries was the known desire of the King of the French to marry one of his sons, the Duc de Montpensier, either to the Queen of Spain or to the Infanta, the queen's sister,—it scarcely seemed much to matter which. It had at one time been more than hinted that he had designed the young queen to marry the Duc d'Aumale, and the younger Infanta (a mere child) to marry Montpensier, so that, at all events, one of his sons should be sure of the Spanish dynasty; but it may be readily believed that other powers of Europe looked askance at any alliance of this kind between France and Spain, and that Lord Palmerston had for some time been keeping his eye on the attempt.

On the 2d of September, at six o'clock in the evening, the *Victoria and Albert* reached Tréport. Prince de Joinville, who had awaited the royal yacht at Cherbourg, where he had gone on board in the morning, was on the look-out for the royal barge, in which the king his father had put off from Tréport to welcome the royal visitors. The occasion was one which was likely to cause some emotion, and the Queen records that as the barge approached nearer and nearer she felt more and more agitated. With the king were Aumale, Montpensier, Augustus of Saxe-Coburg and Gotha, first-cousin to the Queen and Prince Albert, and married to the Princess Clémentine of Orleans, M. Guizot the French minister, Lord Cowley our representative in France, and other ministers and officers. Louis Philippe was standing up in the boat, and appeared to be so impatient to express his gratification that he had to be restrained from

attempting to get out and make his way to the deck of the yacht before it was near enough to enable him to do so. He went up as quickly as possible, and with a kindly paternal embrace repeatedly expressed his delight at seeing her Majesty, who was much affected by the evident sincerity of his pleasure. The Queen and the Prince, with the Earl of Aberdeen, our foreign minister, who had accompanied them, quickly embarked on the French royal barge, on which the standards of France and England floated side by side over the two sovereigns, as the crew, all dressed in white with red sashes and red ribbons round their hats, rowed to shore. It was a fine, and in some sense an impressive sight, as the setting sun threw a golden glow upon the scene. A crowd of people, a number of troops, the whole French court, and all the local authorities had assembled. The king led her Majesty up the steep stair of the landing-place, where she was received by the Queen of the French with much emotion and repeated maternal embraces, and by her dear friend Louise, Queen of the Belgians, the widowed Hélène, Duchess of Orleans, who appeared in deep mourning, the Princess de Joinville, and Madame Adelaide, the sister of Louis Philippe, who was a personage of no little historical note, and who was consulted about all domestic matters of importance. The welcome was almost overwhelming, and the Queen felt it deeply; nor did the pleasure of the reception diminish, for this royal family of France, cultured, courteous, and with a certain simple amiability that won on the sincere nature of their royal guests, quickly made both her Majesty and the Prince feel at home in their midst, and contrived to show charming hospitality in a delightfully easy and, as it were, a gay, unpremeditated fashion.

The first day of the stay at the chateau was a Sunday, and

the Queen, true to her habits of early rising, was up by half-past seven, and looking out at the scene in the clear morning air, listening to the church-bells and the sound of a mill at work, and watching the people in the garden with all the interest that she never failed to show in the aspects of scenery and in personal and national peculiarities. Probably in deference to English customs, with which, of course, the king was well acquainted, a kind of Sunday quiet was preserved; but his Majesty as usual was full of spirits and of amusing anecdote. After hearing prayers read in a private room by one of the suite, the Queen and Prince Albert accompanied the royal hosts and some of the family over the principal part of the chateau to see the Gallery of the Guises, the great collection of family pictures saved from destruction by faithful servants during the Revolution, and the beautiful little chapel full of painted windows and statues of saints, quite a little gem, and the first Catholic chapel the Queen had ever seen. Her Majesty on this occasion made closer acquaintance with the widowed Duchess of Orleans, with whom she afterwards had much sympathetic conversation, so that she made way very quickly to the hearts of the bereaved mother and her children. There were drives in the forest, where a delightful *fête champêtre* occupied one day, the party returning to a cheerful dinner followed by a charming concert by the artists of the Conservatoire; there were domestic talks and interchanges of family confidence between her Majesty and the amiable Queen of the French, who had undergone such sorrow and bereavement, and was truly tender and affectionate to the young mother, who showed her the portraits of "Puss and the Boy" (the Princess Royal and the Prince of Wales); and there was a glorious excursion of the whole company in *chars-à-bancs* to St. Catherine, a hunting-lodge in the forest,

where a kind of impromptu but yet perfect dejeuner was served under the trees. On the last evening of their stay, the Queen and the Prince with the other numerous guests were entertained by an excellent dramatic performance in the Galerie, which had been converted into a little theatre. "The first piece," the Queen informs us, "was *Le Château de ma Nièce*, in which Madame Mira acted delightfully; the second, *L'Humoriste*, in which Arnal sent us into fits of laughter. The speech in which he read out of a paper the following advertisement, "*Une Dame Espagnole désire entrer dans une maison, où il y a des enfants, afin de pouvoir leur montrer sa langue*" (A Spanish lady desires a place in a house, where there are children, so as to be able to show them her tongue), was enough to kill one."

On Thursday, September 7th, the return journey had to be made, and the whole party which had welcomed the coming, speeded the parting guests by going with them to Tréport, putting off with them in the royal barge, and the king, the princes, and ministers again going on board the yacht to say the last farewell. The Prince de Joinville remained to accompany the departing visitors as far as Brighton; and in recording this her Majesty recalls a remarkable circumstance which appears again to suggest the sense of a threatening cloud hovering over the Orleans family: "The dear queen said, when she paid me that visit yesterday, in speaking of the children: 'I commend them to you, madame, when we shall be no more, and also to Prince Albert; give them your protection, they love you from their hearts.'"

Yes, it had been a delightful, a never-to-be-forgotten holiday, and none the less so because of the tender sentiments which had been associated with it. Nothing could have exceeded the courtesy and almost paternal kindness of the king, who, as a

souvenir of the visit, presented her Majesty and the Prince with two splendid pieces of Gobelins tapestry that had been thirty years in hand, and a box of beautiful Sevres china. There is no reason to doubt that the pleasure and the affection expressed by the heads of the French royal family were genuine, or that the words of welcome and of deep respect for England repeatedly uttered by the king were sincere; but the public here, or that section of it which watched foreign politics, was not without suspicion that there had been some private and confidential talk which might thereafter touch on foreign relations, and, as a matter of fact, this was so. The presence of "the good Aberdeen," as Stockmar used to call that rather weakly trustful minister, was not a guarantee against such a pair of nut-crackers as the wily Louis Philippe and the astute Guizot, and for some time it was thought that serious concessions or expressions might have been the result. This, however, was not the case, though, as it turned out afterwards, there *was* some conversation about the Spanish marriages. Prince Albert, writing to Stockmar, said:

"The family of Louis Philippe have a strong feeling that for the last thirteen years they have been placed under a ban, as though they were lepers, by all Europe, and by every court, and expelled from the society of reigning houses, and therefore they rate very highly the visit of the most powerful sovereign in Europe. The king said this to me over and over again. Guizot and Aberdeen, as might be expected, are being abused by both parties for betraying their country.

"Little passed of a political nature, except the declaration of Louis Philippe to Aberdeen, that he will not give his son to Spain, even if he were asked; and Aberdeen's answer, that, excepting one of his sons, any aspirant whom Spain might choose would be acceptable to England."

This, then, was the conclusion arrived at; but whether the French king intended to keep his promise or not, he afterwards broke it in the most deliberate and artful manner. The visit of the Queen and Prince Albert to France, however, cannot be said to have contributed to his breach of faith, and, indeed, had done much to establish some measure of international good feeling, which probably helped to prevent the graver consequences that might have ensued from his subsequent false dealing. To understand the topic of the informal conferences held at the Château d'Eu, it may be as well to note that in relation to the proposal to find a husband for the Infanta of Spain, Prince Leopold of Saxe-Coburg-Cohary had been for some time regarded as a suitable person, and it was supposed that he would receive the support of England, though it had been repeatedly declared that England would remain neutral and would promote no claim so long as no Orleans alliance was attempted. On this the king pledged himself that at all events he would take no step to forward the marriage of the Infanta with Montpensier until after the Queen of Spain had married and had children to succeed to the throne.

We may see from the few extracts made from the Queen's journal, showing a very rare capacity for being easily pleased which belongs in a great measure to the equally rare talent for observation and comparison, that her Majesty had retained the characteristics which distinguished her as the Princess Victoria. One incident which occurred on the voyage to Tréport is recorded by Lady Bloomfield, and curiously illustrates how little the Victoria of former days had altered in a certain archness and love of fun. The favourite maid of honour says, "I remained on deck a long time with her Majesty, and she taught me to plait paper for bonnets, which was a favourite occupation

of the Queen's. Lady Canning and I had settled ourselves in a very sheltered place, protected by the paddle-box; and remarking what a comfortable spot we had chosen, her Majesty sent for her camp-stool and settled herself beside us, plaiting away most composedly, when suddenly we observed a commotion amongst the sailors, little knots of men talking together in a mysterious manner; first one officer came up to them, then another, looking puzzled, and then Lord Adolphus Fitzclarence was called. The Queen, much puzzled, asked what was the matter, and inquired whether we were going to have a mutiny on board? Lord Adolphus laughed, but remarked that he really did not know what *would* happen unless her Majesty would be graciously 'pleased to remove her seat.' 'Move my seat!' said the Queen; 'why should I? What possible harm can I be doing here?' 'Well, ma'am,' said Lord Adolphus, 'the fact is, your Majesty is unwittingly closing up the door of the place where the grog tubs are kept, and so the men cannot have their grog!' 'Oh, very well!' said the Queen, 'I will move on one condition, and that is, that you bring me a glass of grog.' This was accordingly done, and after tasting it the Queen said, 'I am afraid I can only make the same remark I did once before, that I think it would be very good if it were stronger.' This, of course, delighted the men, and the little incident caused much amusement on board."

Her Majesty and the Prince after their return from Tréport spent a few days at Brighton with their children, who had been taken there to meet them. On the 12th of September they embarked again for Ostend—on another long-desired journey—to meet the King and Queen of the Belgians, and with them to visit some of the grand old historical cities of Flanders. The tour was full of interest, for, as Prince Albert

said, the old cities had put on their fairest array, and were very tastefully decorated with tapestries, flowers, trees, and pictures, which, combined with the numerous old monuments, churches, and convents, and the gay crowds of people, produced a most peculiar effect. They were received with the greatest enthusiasm by the Belgian population, who regarded the confidential relations with England as a guarantee of a continuance of political well-being; and, apart from the quaint pageants and pleasant festivities with which she was entertained, her Majesty was deeply gratified by being able to visit her uncle in his own kingdom. "It was such a joy for me," she wrote from her yacht a few hours after parting from him, "to be once again under the roof of one who has ever been a father to me!" But there were children there also. "We found uncle and aunt very well and greatly delighted at our visit," said Prince Albert afterwards to Stockmar. "The children are blooming. Little Charlotte[1] is quite the prettiest child you ever saw. . . . Leopold and Philippe are very tall of their age, and quite strong and vigorous."

The brief foreign travels were now over, and Prince Albert had to prepare for new and important duties. Late in the following month he accompanied the Queen to Cambridge, where they were received with a loyalty which fully equalled that which had been displayed at Oxford. They were accompanied into the city by as many as two thousand horsemen. Her Majesty was greatly pleased, if not somewhat surprised, by the enthusiasm of the undergraduates and the energy of their acclamations when the degree of LL.D. was conferred on the Prince, who was duly invested with cap and robe at the Senate House. Of course there was a state reception of the royal

[1] What strange events occurred in the relations of France and Belgium! This Charlotte in later years became the wife of the Archduke Maximilian, who was fatally induced to undertake the government of Mexico by Napoleon III., and came to a tragic end.

visitors by the Duke of Northumberland (the chancellor) and Professors and Masters of Arts in residence. Addresses were presented by Lord Lyndhurst, high-steward, and Mr. Whewell, vice-chancellor. The Queen held a levee on the evening of her arrival, and resided at Trinity College. An amusing letter of Professor Sedgwick records the visit of the royal party to the Woodwardian Museum, a way to which had to be cleared through the old divinity schools, which had become mere lumber-rooms and receptacles for all kinds of rubbish, and the professor had hard work to make the place look even decent.

"Inside the museum all was previously in order, and inside the entrance-door from the gangway was a huge picture of the Megatherium, under which the Queen must pass to the museum, and at that place I was to receive her Majesty. I bowed as low as my anatomy would let me, and the Queen and Prince bowed again most graciously; and so began Act First. The Queen seemed happy and well pleased, and was mightily taken with one or two of my monsters, especially with the Plesiosaurus and gigantic stag. The subject was new to her; but the Prince evidently had a good general knowledge of the old world, and not only asked good questions, and listened with great courtesy to all I had to say, but in one or two instances helped me on by pointing to the rare things in my collection, especially in that part of it which contains the German fossils. I thought myself very fortunate in being able to exhibit the finest collection of German fossils to be seen in England. They fairly went the round of the museum, neither of them seemed in a hurry, and the Queen was quite happy to hear her husband talk about a novel subject with so much knowledge and spirit. He called her back once or twice to look at a fine impression of a dragon-fly which I have in the Solenhope slate."

In the evening the royal party went to Wimpole, where they remained two nights as the guest of Lord Hardwicke, and after visiting Bourne, the country-seat of Lord De la Warr, returned to Wimpole to a grand ball, to which his lordship invited the county families and other distinguished guests.

In the following month a pleasant visit was made to Sir Robert and Lady Peel at Drayton Manor, and the Prince took the opportunity to go to Birmingham, not only because it is one of the most important towns in the kingdom, but because he desired to become acquainted with some of those manufactures for which it is celebrated. As it had recently been the scene of much rioting, and had the reputation of being the stronghold of Chartism, some of the ministry would have dissuaded him from making the journey, and represented that his appearance in the town might lead to disagreeable demonstrations; but he had already a conviction that any misrepresentation or hostile feeling which had been manifested against him proceeded from a few persons in quite a different class of the community, and that neither he nor the Queen need hesitate to trust to the friendly loyalty of the common people. Nor was he in the least mistaken: the entire population of 280,000 seemed to have come into the streets to receive him, and there was no mistaking their hearty and almost overpowering greetings: the expressions of good-will were universal, and the mayor, who rode in the carriage with the Prince and was said to be a Chartist of extreme views, said that the visit had created the greatest enthusiasm, that it had brought into unison bitterly hostile political parties, and that he would vouch for the devoted loyalty of the whole Chartist body.

Beside visiting some of the most important manufactories the Prince found time to see the town-hall and to listen to the

fine organ, and then went to King Edward the Sixth's School. It is worthy of note, as indicating his views, that he was strongly interested to learn from the head-master Dr. Lee, afterwards Bishop of Manchester, that though the institution was a Church of England foundation, there were 400 boys of Dissenters in the school, and that the scheme worked well. There was little time to explain in detail the manner in which this happy result was effected, but the Prince very shortly afterwards applied to Dr. Lee for further particulars of the system.

From Drayton Manor her Majesty and the Prince, with their suite, went to Chatsworth, which was reached on the 1st of December, and were there entertained for three days with splendid courtesy and almost regal hospitality by the Duke of Devonshire in one of the most beautiful of the great houses of England, and amidst some of the finest scenery of the country. Thence they proceeded to Belvoir Castle, where there was a great hunting party, in which the Prince distinguished himself as a bold and skilful rider across country—much to the surprise of many, who had not expected to find that he could compete in the honours of the field with the fashionable hunting men of Melton and Leicester as well as practically promote art, music, and manufactures, and discuss the political situation with the leading Whigs who had attended the brilliant assembly at Chatsworth.

The rest and comparative retirement of Windsor must have been welcome after the excitement of these journeys, and the Queen took great interest in the progress of the model farms which his Royal Highness had now brought to such completeness that they were already excellent examples of successful experiments in agriculture and the raising of stock, the improvement of which the Prince was much interested in, and earnestly desired to encourage. He was able soon afterward to report

that he had done well by the sale by auction of some of his stock, and he then became a successful exhibitor at the agricultural shows. It was said at a later date by a good authority writing on the subject, that "the most practical man could not go that pleasant round from the Flemish farm to the Norfolk, and so back again by the home and the dairy, without learning something wherever he went." The Honourable Georgiana Liddell, who was about to become Lady Bloomfield, and whose waiting as the intimate attendant of the Queen was nearly over, wrote on December the 18th: "We walked with the Queen and Prince to the home farm, saw the turkeys crammed, looked at the pigs, and then went to see the new aviary, where there is a beautiful collection of pigeons, fowls, &c., of rare kinds. The pigeons are so tame they will perch on Prince Albert's hat and the Queen's shoulders. It was funny seeing the royal pair amusing themselves with farming."

It may be mentioned here that among the complaints or accusations then and subsequently raised by those who were on the look-out for excuses for censure or suspicion, was the allegation that the Prince realized a profit from his farming: as though the experiment would have been more noble and useful if it had proved to be unsuccessful. Early in 1846 the parochial authorities of Windsor appear to have regarded the Prince's profitable operations from another point of view, and claimed to rate the Flemish farm, a demand which his Royal Highness technically resisted, on the ground of the estate being royal property in royal occupation. This contention was supported by high legal authority, and the claimants then presented an address, in which, while admitting that they had been in error, they apologized for the observations reflecting on his Royal Highness which had appeared in the public prints, and asked

him to consider the hardship inflicted on the parish by the exemption of so large a property from the rating. This was quite another thing, and the Prince replied that he now felt himself at liberty to take the course most satisfactory to his own feelings, and to pay as a voluntary contribution a sum equal to the rate which would have been annually due had his legal liability been established.

Once more the royal parents were with their little children at Christmastide, and we can gather from letters and jottings in journals with what watchful eyes they marked the progress of the three infants, during the intervals between the brief journeys that had occupied the autumn. "The children in whose welfare you take so kindly an interest are making most favourable progress," wrote the Prince to Baron Stockmar. "The eldest, 'Pussy,' is now quite a little personage; she speaks English and French with great fluency and choice of phrase. . . . The little gentleman is grown much stronger than he was. . . . The youngest is the beauty of the family, and is an extraordinarily good and merry child."

"Our *Pussette*," the Queen wrote a few weeks afterwards, "learns a verse of Lamartine by heart, which ends with '*Le tableau se déroule à mes pieds.*' (The picture unrolls itself at my feet.). To show how well she understood this difficult line, I must tell you the following *bon-mot.* When she was riding on her pony, and looking at the cows and sheep, she turned to Madame Charrier (her governess), and said, '*Voilà le tableau qui se déroule à mes pieds!*' Is not this extraordinary for a child of three years?"

"She speaks French fluently," the favourite maid of honour wrote in her journal, "and she was reading the other day when Lady Lyttelton went up to her; so she motioned her away with

her hand and said, '*N'approchez pas moi, moi ne veut pas vous.*'" The same authority records an interesting interview of the Duke of Wellington and the little princess, who was waiting to go for a drive with the Queen in the pony carriage. She looked at the duke very hard and earnestly, and in his most gallant manner he bent down and kissed her tiny hand, and he asked her to remember him, as no doubt she did and does still. "We drove with the Queen and the little princess yesterday," says another entry; "the latter chatted the whole time, and was very amusing. . . . The Queen was talking to us, and not taking any notice of the princess, who suddenly exclaimed, 'There's a cat under the trees'—fertile imagination on her part, as there was nothing of the kind; but having succeeded in attracting attention, she said: 'Cat came out to look at the Queen, I suppose.' Then she took a fancy to some heather at the side of the road, and asked Lady Dunmore to get her some. Lady Dunmore observed she could not do that, as we were driving too fast; so the princess answered, 'No, *you* can't, but *those girls* might get out and get me some,'—meaning Miss Paget and me."

While the household at Windsor was still pursuing its quiet occupations and domestic amusements, there came the sad intelligence of the death of Prince Albert's father at Gotha on the 29th of January, 1844. Baron Stockmar had long before endeavoured to prepare the Prince for an event, the probability of which the old physician had foreseen; but such warnings seldom diminish the force of very sudden calamities, and the deep filial affection of the Prince caused him to feel for the time overwhelmed with grief.

He felt keenly that the Duchess of Kent, the Queen, and himself were sitting together mourning for him whom he had not

seen for so long—whom in this world he would see no more—and that he was separated from the other mourners at Coburg, unable to comfort them or to be comforted by them in return. "The good Alexandrine," he wrote to Stockmar—speaking of his sister-in-law, "seems to me in the whole picture like the consoling angel. Just such is Victoria to me, who feels and shares my grief, and is the treasure on which my whole existence rests. The relation in which we stand to one another leaves nothing to desire. It is a union of heart and soul, and is therefore noble, and in it the poor children shall find their cradle, so as to be able one day to ensure a like happiness for themselves."

The Queen suffered greatly, not only because of the loss to herself, but on account of the deep grief of the husband whom she loved, and who now felt that the associations which had kept green the memory of his early youth had been suddenly broken by the death of his father. It was sorrow to them both to be separated even for the few days which would be required for the journey to Coburg, and for all that he would have to do; but she encouraged him to go that he might help to alleviate the sorrow of the bereaved family. Public business made it impracticable for him to leave England before parliament rose for the Easter recess; but on the 26th of March the Queen of the Belgians, with unfailing kindness, came to stay with her Majesty at Windsor, and on the 28th he set out for Dover, whence he wrote to the Queen before embarking for Ostend. His letter, like others which he sent almost daily, was as much a "love-letter" as though it had been written before or immediately after their marriage. All the time he was away he counted the hours till his return, and described with tender graphic touches the incidents of his meeting with members of the family

and others, and his visits to various places full of gentle recollections, where he was received by the people with unaffected delight. One passage in his first letter from Dover reads strangely now:—"The railroad is wonderful, especially that part of it between this and Folkestone." The faithful Stockmar—old, feeble, and suffering from a recent illness, started for London, and did not even stop at Meiningen to see the Prince, who was to arrive there on the following day. On the 11th of April the Prince returned to Windsor. The brief entry in his diary was: "Crossed on the 11th. I arrived at six o'clock in the evening at Windsor. *Great joy!*"

The Queen's birthday was celebrated in the usual happy fashion. Her Majesty and the Prince had each prepared a surprise-present for each other in the shape of a picture, and each had commissioned Eastlake to paint it. That given by Prince Albert to the Queen was a little group of angels, such as her Majesty had admired on one of the frescoes in the garden-house at Buckingham Palace—angels offering a medallion inscribed "*Heil und Segen*" (health and blessing), and this was placed in a room hung with garlands.

Only a few days afterwards a rather startling piece of intelligence arrived at Windsor, to the effect that the Emperor of Russia was on his way to England, and might be expected at any time. Though not an absolute stranger to England, for, as we have seen, he had been here twenty-eight years before when he was grand-duke, this was rather an abrupt announcement of his coming for the first time to see the Queen, who was at Buckingham Palace, but was about to go down with the court to Windsor. It was one of the emperor's peculiarities to make sudden visits, but on arriving on the 1st of June he took up his abode with the Russian ambassador at Ashburnham

House, whence he was escorted next day to the palace, where he was received by the Queen.

The King of Saxony was also there as a guest, having arrived on the previous day, and soon won the regard and esteem of all who met him by his gentle courtesy and simple good-humour. He was a highly accomplished man, and came to England, not to be the recipient of ceremonious attentions, but for the pleasure of meeting her Majesty and Prince Albert, and to see all that could be seen without giving much trouble. He appears to have enjoyed his visit thoroughly, and none the less, perhaps, that the arrival of the emperor gave him an opportunity of keeping more in the background and spending a good deal of time in sight-seeing on his own account. He remained a week after the emperor had left, and his unassuming, unaffected manners, his sweetness of character, and his evident delight at all that he had witnessed, left a most agreeable impression. Unhappily, this most amiable sovereign came to an untimely end by being thrown from his carriage in 1854.

There is an old saying, "Scratch the Russian and you will find the Tartar," and it might have been appropriately emphasized in relation to the compliment and show of courtesy displayed by the Emperor Nicholas toward the Queen and Prince Albert, and even to Lord Aberdeen and Sir Robert Peel. It was exaggerated, and many things that he said were inconsistent with his known practice, and his constant claims to autocratic dominion. In fact he came here obviously for a political purpose—to obtain some kind of assurance that the future interference with Turkey which he was then contemplating would not be actively discountenanced, even if it were not participated in by England. He detested the notion of an Anglo-French alliance that might thwart his schemes; and spoke

contemptuously of France and the opinions that might be held there.

The emperor was escorted to Windsor Castle by Prince Albert, and he greatly admired the magnificence of the royal residence, and the vast hospitality which was displayed there in a manner that gave no impression of any unusual effort. "It is worthy of you, madam," he said, when speaking to the Queen of the imposing beauty of the royal castle. It is recorded by her Majesty that he never drank a drop of wine, and ate extremely little, which was perhaps to be accounted for by his suffering from heat and from congestion in the head. "He is certainly a very striking man," the Queen said, "still very handsome; his profile is beautiful, and his manners most dignified and graceful; extremely civil, quite alarmingly so, he is so full of attentions and *politesses*. But the expression of the eyes is severe and unlike anything I ever saw before. He gives Albert and myself the impression of a man who is not happy, and on whom the burden of his immense power and position weighs heavily and painfully. He seldom smiles, and when he does, the expression is not a happy one." Lady Lyttelton in one of her amusing descriptive letters wrote: "The only fault in his face is that he has pale eyelashes, and his enormous and very brilliant eyes have no shade; besides which they have the awful look given by occasional glimpses of white above the eyeball, which comes from his father Paul, I suppose, and gives a savage wildness for a moment, pretty often."

During his five days' visit everything possible was done to make that visit memorable. There was a grand review in Windsor Park, in which he was much interested, asking the Queen's permission to ride down the line, and on his return thanking her warmly for having allowed him to see his "old

comrades." He was surprised at the rapidity of the artillery movements, and it was said that during the inspection he was desirous of noting particularly the regiments that had fought and been victorious in India. The Iron Duke put himself at the head of his Life Guards as they passed before her Majesty, and Prince Albert was also in front of his regiment, saluting the Queen not only with his sword but with a smile and a look of tender affection. It was said, that when the old duke first appeared on the ground the multitude cheered him with such loud enthusiasm that he felt compelled to direct their attention to the visitors in whose honour they had met, and taking off his hat called out, "The emperor! the emperor!"

The next day was Ascot day, and the royal party were at the races, where another brilliant reception awaited them from the enormous crowd assembled there. On the following day there was a return to Buckingham Palace, and in the evening a great dinner party, numbering 260; and on the morning of the 8th, the court, with the royal and imperial guests, attended a magnificent fête to which they were invited by the Duke of Devonshire at Chiswick. At dinner that evening the czar was profuse in his expressions of delight, saying what a brilliant assembly it had been, and what a great number of beautiful women had been present: for he was still an avowed admirer of female beauty; "but," the Queen archly wrote in her journal, "he remains very faithful to those he admired twenty-eight years ago."

In his repeated conversations with Sir Robert Peel and Lord Aberdeen, as well as with the Prince, the czar did "protest too much." His chief anxiety, he averred, was to convince English statesmen of his truthful and upright character, and his strictly honourable intentions; he was perpetually saying, to

everybody with whom he came in contact, "I know that I am taken for an actor, but indeed I am not. I am thoroughly straightforward; I say what I mean, and what I promise I fulfil."

The emperor would frequently talk with so little restraint and in such a loud voice that the Queen herself was somewhat concerned at it, and Stockmar records that on one occasion, the windows being open, people outside could hear all that he said, and Peel, to whom he was talking, was obliged to request him to withdraw to the end of the room.

The substance of his apparently unreserved representations was that his honest desire was to be on confidential and friendly terms with England; that he wanted things to remain as they were, with the concurrence of Austria; and that the condition of Turkey, the "sick man" or "dying man," as he used to call it, might soon require such intervention as would prevent the preponderating influence of any single power. "I do not covet one inch of Turkish soil for myself, but neither will I allow anybody else to have one," he declared to Sir Robert Peel; and it was evident enough that he was referring with almost bitter emphasis to France, and her recent policy in Eastern affairs.

How far this apparently unreserved and avowedly undiplomatic conversation may have been designed to draw his interlocutors into frank admissions or indiscreet promises is uncertain, but it undoubtedly was not successful in the one great object of his visit, namely, injuring the friendly overtures that might maintain an alliance between France and England. Whether he misinterpreted any portions of the conversations in such a way as to deceive himself that the English government would join him in some scheme of intervention in case of the collapse of the Porte or of a catastrophe in Turkey cannot

be determined. All that is certainly known is that he very soon acted as though this had been taken for granted. The Queen had at first much objected to his unexpected visit, partly, perhaps, because of political complications which might ensue from it, but she always insisted that the reception of foreign sovereigns should be of a totally independent character, and, as she afterwards wrote to King Leopold: "Our motives and politics are *not* to be exclusive, but to be on good terms with all —and why should we not? We make no secret of it." Truth to tell, however, her Majesty was somewhat put out by having to entertain a czar almost unawares, and the idea of the worry and bustle that such a reception would involve troubled her at a time when it was desirable that she should not be over-troubled. The emperor soon interested her, however. His evident affection for his wife and children; the manner in which he could attract her own little ones and play with them; and a certain personal gentleness and sentiment which, along with his melancholy, lay deep down in his character, moved her womanly heart; and she found that there was much in him that she could not help liking when in the quieter hours of conversation they learned to know and to understand each other.

There was a rather sad farewell spoken by the autocratic sovereign, who had all the time of his visit shown deep and earnest, almost grateful, respect for the young Queen and the Prince, who had, he said, treated him as a brother. He left the Queen and her children with caresses and blessings, which at the time were sincere and belonged less to his imperial than to his personal character. He had made munificent donations to some charities designed for the relief of distressed foreigners in London, and to one or two other institutions; had established a piece of plate, of the value of £500, to be run for annually at

Ascot; had distributed presents of great value to some old friends, and diamond snuff-boxes to gentlemen of the court, and so far may be said to have departed with an odour of fashionable sanctity; but the result of the political conversations was not long in arriving. After the return of the emperor to St. Petersburg a memorandum, drawn up by Count Nesselrode, was despatched to London, where it was deposited among the secret papers at the foreign office, so that its contents were not publicly known till ten years afterwards, at the time of the Crimean war. It is to be hoped that its assumptions were entirely gratuitous, and certainly its conclusions were neither endorsed nor acknowledged by English ministers. It set forth in effect that Russia and England being mutually penetrated with the conviction that it was for their common interest that the Ottoman Porte should maintain its condition of independence and territorial possession in the general interest of the maintenance of peace, the two countries had an equal interest in uniting their efforts to keep up the Ottoman Empire, and to avert all the dangers which could place its safety in jeopardy. That the Porte had a constant tendency to extricate itself from engagements imposed upon it by treaties made with other powers, reckoning upon their mutual jealousy, which would lead to the espousal of its quarrel by some powers when it came into collision with another; that it was necessary not to confirm the Porte in this delusion, and that every time it failed in its obligations towards one of the great powers it was the interest of all the rest to bring their influence to bear upon the offender. The object, therefore, to which Russia and England would have to come to an understanding was to seek to maintain the Ottoman Empire in its present state so long as that political combination should be possible. If it were foreseen that it

must crumble to pieces, to enter into a previous concert as to everything relating to the establishment of a new order of things, and in conjunction to see that the change which might have occurred in the internal situation of that empire should not injuriously affect either the security of their own states and the rights which the treaties assured to them respectively, or the maintenance of the balance of power in Europe. The emperor represented that Austria had agreed to this policy, and that if England, as the great maritime power concurred, France would probably be obliged to concur also and the peace of Europe would be maintained. Reading between the lines, and remembering that the emperor spoke of Turkey as already dying, it is fully obvious that he awaited some opportunity for an attack upon the Ottoman Empire.

The name of Queen Pomaré of Tahiti is not yet forgotten, and as early as 1838 she had written to Queen Victoria imploring assistance and protection against the encroachment of the French residents on the islands under her rule. Her appeal could not be answered by active interference, and in 1842 the intention of these encroachments was shown by the occupation of Tahiti by the French admiral under the pretext of protecting it. Again the unfortunate Pomaré wrote to our Queen, imploring assistance and protection, "the same as afforded relief to my fathers by your fathers." This led to communications, and after violent opposition on the part of the opponents of Guizot, who was accused of putting France at the feet of England, Admiral du Petit Thouars was recalled, and matters went on pacifically for several months, but his successor, the commandant of the French establishment at Tahiti, took the first opportunity of making what very nearly became a *casus belli*. His countrymen had resumed their arrogant demands, and their offensive

conduct towards the people of the island had become so unbearable, that the indignant natives were preparing to rise in defence of their rights. The British representative or consul at Tahiti was Mr. Pritchard, who first went to the island as a missionary, and had lived there for many years, so that he possessed great experience, and had, during the whole time of his residence, actively promoted the well-being of the natives. Of course the French Roman Catholic missionaries were jealous of his influence, and the officers of the "Protective" force scarcely less so, and, therefore, it happened that when a French sentry was seized and disarmed by some natives the commandant of the French establishment ordered Mr. Pritchard to be arrested, accused him of instigating the natives to disturbance, and declared that his property should be answerable for any damage caused to French establishments by the insurgents, and that every drop of French blood that might be shed should be on his head. In his despatches the commander spoke of him as "one Pritchard;" he was only released from arrest on the condition that he should instantly leave the Pacific; and this he was compelled to do without an opportunity of settling his affairs or even seeing his family. When Mr. Pritchard arrived at Valparaiso and came thence to London the public excitement both in and out of parliament was so great that the French alliance was scarcely worth a day's purchase. Sir Robert Peel indignantly denounced the aggression on the British consul as a gross insult accompanied with gross indignity committed by a person clothed with a temporary authority and, so far as could be discovered, by the direction of the French government.

King Leopold, who in the successive difficulties which had arisen with the French government had acted as an intermediary, was again in correspondence with Louis Philippe, who soon

repeated with more and more emphasis that he desired above all things cordial relations with England, and wished Tahiti with the blunders to which its occupation had led, was at the bottom of the sea. After some cooling down of excitement and rather lengthy diplomatic representations, satisfaction was obtained, explanations were given, a moderate indemnity was paid to Mr. Pritchard, and the Queen was able to write to her uncle: "The good ending of our difficulties with France is an immense blessing; but it is really and truly necessary that you and those in Paris should know that the danger was *imminent*." A blessing her Majesty doubtless felt it to be, for she had suffered much anxiety; and in the midst of it, on the 6th of August, 1844, the birth of a second son had taken place at Windsor Castle. "The only thing almost to mar our happiness," the Queen wrote to her uncle just after this event, "is the heavy and threatening cloud which hangs over our relations with France, and which, I assure you, distresses and alarms us sadly. The whole nation here are very angry. . . . God grant all may come right, and I am still of good cheer; but the French keep us constantly in hot water."

Preparations had soon to be made for the baptism of the infant second prince; but before that event there arrived at Windsor Castle a guest who was destined to become more distinguished in European history than either the Czar Nicholas or King Louis Philippe. This visitor was Prince William, brother and probable successor of the King of Prussia. He was then governor of Pomerania, and in his youth (for he was now forty-seven years old) had served in the campaigns against France in 1813-1815. He was a quiet, thoughtful man of no small experience and much sagacity, and though, perhaps, few people at that time expected that he would become the ruler of

a great united German empire, he exhibited an ability which impressed the Queen, who said: "I like him very much. He is extremely amiable, agreeable, and sensible, cheerful and easy to get on with. . . . On all public questions he spoke most freely, mildly, and judiciously, and I think would make a steadier and safer king than the present." The prince, who much enjoyed his visit and had a sincere admiration for the greatness of England, which he attributed to our political and religious institutions, became much attached to Prince Albert, with whom he remained on terms of friendship; their mutually frank disposition and the interchange of political views on the affairs of the Continent having at once given interest to their conversation. The prince remained only for a few days, but he was present at the quiet family gathering at the royal christening on the 6th of September, when the infant Prince, now the Duke of Edinburgh, was named Alfred Ernest Albert, the sponsors being Prince George of Cambridge, represented by his father the Duke; Prince Leiningen, represented by the Duke of Wellington; and the Duchess of Saxe-Coburg and Gotha, represented by the Duchess of Kent. "The scene was very solemn," her Majesty wrote. " . . . To see these two children there too (the Crown-princess and the Prince of Wales) seemed such a dream to me. . . . May God bless them all, poor little things!"

There was now no immediate apprehension of trouble in European affairs, and at home the financial measures of Sir Robert Peel had done much to revive commercial prosperity, while the national budget showed a serviceable surplus instead of an alarming deficiency. The condition of manufacturing industry and the distress of large numbers of artisans and agricultural labourers were, however, causing much uneasiness.

The Anti-Corn-law League was actively extending its operations and was daily increasing its numbers and influence. The state of affairs in Ireland was disheartening in the extreme, for to the ordinary effects of rioting and repeated local insurrection and agrarian outrage was added the want and destitution of a large part of the population. A change had, however, come over the scene so far as the repeal movement was concerned. O'Connell was reckless in statement, wild in appeal and denunciation, but comparatively prudent in action. How could he be otherwise, and yet hope to hold his position and to continue to agitate for what seemed to be no nearer! He knew very well that repeal of the union and the restoration of an Irish parliament on College Green would never be attained by "monster" meetings on the hill of Tara or elsewhere, and that actual rebellion would be fatal. It was only by the British parliament that any such changes of the government of Ireland as he sought could be really effected, even though he may have pretended not to count the House of Lords as a powerful factor against him. Of the Queen he always spoke with a certain tender regard and with abundant loyalty. Singularly enough it was to be to a great extent through the House of Lords that he was to lose the power that he exercised, and in a way that could scarcely have been expected. O'Connell never intended to incite to actual rebellion, or to employ physical force to attain the end that he had announced; but he desired to keep the government in mind that he had the control of an immense number of men, and that in that respect he was, as he had been called, "the uncrowned King" of Ireland. It was a perpetual threat of what he might or could do in case of a foreign war or of being driven to extremities. The stupendous meeting of, it is said, 2,000,000 persons around the hill at Tara was to be succeeded by another

equally imposing at Clontarf. The day before it was to be held the lord-lieutenant issued a proclamation prohibiting it as "calculated to excite reasonable and well-grounded apprehension." The proclamation had been dangerously delayed. Numbers of people were on the way to Clontarf; the surrounding roads were filled with them. The risk of a collision with the police and the troops was very great, and the loss of life would have been dreadful. It is not surprising that O'Connell and many of his supporters charged the government with the intention of bringing about a collision, that they might apprehend and punish the leaders and so terrify the people of the country. But O'Connell immediately issued a proclamation of his own, which was far more influential than that of the lord-lieutenant, saying that the orders of the government must be observed, and exhorting the people to return quietly to their own homes. He was obeyed, and no meeting was held; but from that moment his power over his immediate followers began to wane and the repeal agitation seemed to dwindle. The great agitator had no intention of resorting to physical force, and all the magnificent display of power had been only demonstration. There was division among the repealers—there had been an anti-climax. It was impossible to maintain the extraordinary conditions of enthusiasm under which the leader had kept the Irish people in suspense, and the "national" movement was split into two divisions, which differed as to the means to be employed to attain the common end.

O'Connell and some of his followers were prosecuted by the government, and after a lengthy trial were found guilty. He was sentenced to twelve months' imprisonment and a fine of £2000. The others received lighter sentences. He then appealed to the House of Lords, at the same time issuing

a proclamation to the Irish people directing them to remain quiet and to commit no offence against the law, and they again obeyed. Three of the law lords out of five were of opinion that the judgment against O'Connell should be reversed, on the ground that the jury lists on the trial had been improperly prepared. In a country professing the Roman Catholic religion, and on the trial of a Roman Catholic prisoner, there had been no Roman Catholic on the jury. The sentence was cancelled, the great agitator was released, and his release was celebrated by a grand triumphal procession; but the notes of gratulation might well have sounded in a minor key, for his release was really a proof of the triumph of a regard for law and justice in the very assembly which he had so often assailed. The influence of O'Connell was never the same after the trial, but the men who now sought to supersede him could never attain to the same power or ascendency over the people, either to rouse them to any genuine enthusiasm or to restrain them from crime and useless acts of violence.

The condition of Ireland was not such as to make it expedient for the Queen and Prince Albert to visit the country so soon after the excitement caused by the release of the prisoners. Doubtless her Majesty might have gone there with safety, and it is not probable that either she or the Prince would have feared to do so; but the ministry advised against it, and an invitation was therefore accepted from Lord Glenlyon, who had placed Blair Castle at the disposal of her Majesty.

Some of us may remember what a theme "Blair-Athole" some time afterwards became for the satirical papers, when Lord Glenlyon had become Duke of Athole, and displayed the most extraordinary determination in forcibly preventing tourists from entering, even by means of roads or paths, his property at Glen

Tilt. This, however, was a good while after the Queen's second visit to the Highlands.

An early start was made from Windsor on the 9th of September, a very wet morning. The little Princess Alice and the baby (the five-weeks-old Prince Alfred) were taken in to say "good-bye" and to see grandmama, who had come to say "good-bye" also. Then the little Prince of Wales appeared, and "Vicky," the Princess Royal, who was to be taken to Scotland, and was already prepared and impatient to go on this her first important journey, during which she seems to have acquitted herself with admirable self-possession and to have shown that she inherited the capacity for calmly enjoying in her own way the occurrences and events of the hour. The royal yacht reached Dundee on the morning of the 11th, and the barge conveyed the royal party to the landing-place or staircase covered with red cloth. The Queen says: "Albert walked up the steps with me, I holding his arm and Vicky his hand, amidst the loud cheers of the people, all the way to the carriage, our dear Vicky behaving like a grown-up person, not put out, nor frightened, nor nervous." The self-possessed little princess was then consigned by a stalwart footman to the carriage next to that of the Queen, with her governess and her nurse, and we are informed that during the long drive to the Pass of Killiecrankie, and thence to Blair-Athole, her conduct was irreproachable. At a small but clean inn at Dunkeld the royal party alighted that the princess might have some broth, and she stood at the window and bowed to the people assembled outside. The Queen might well record that the presence of the child travelling with them reminded her of herself when she was the "little Princess." The little "Vicky" was an excellent traveller, going to sleep at her usual times in the



carriage, not put out or frightened by crowds, but pleased and amused. She never even heard the anchor go at night on board ship, but slept as sound as a top.

The journey to the castle was, of course, diversified by loyal demonstrations, and it is mentioned that after leaving Dunkeld, where Lord Glenlyon joined the party, her Majesty and the Prince stopped at Moulinearn to taste the "Athole brose," which was brought to the carriage. The visit was to be a quiet one, free from all ceremonial. Lord and Lady Glenlyon had given up Blair to the royal party, and were themselves living in the factor's house at a little distance. The Queen's account of her stay records her enjoyment of the Highland scenery which she was able to visit with the Prince, both of them riding on the mountain ponies provided for them, and attended only by a faithful Highland servant of Lord Glenlyon, one Sandy M'Ara, or on other occasions making up a party to go in carriages, the Prince driving with her Majesty and the ladies, to visit some points of interest. There was a delightful drive when the Prince took her Majesty in the pony phaeton along Glen Tilt and amidst lovely scenery, all within five miles of the castle; and there were walks to view the falls and to other spots, each of which gave a new sensation of delight. There was, of course, some shooting and deer-stalking, which was witnessed by the Queen and some of her party, who had to speak in whispers lest they should spoil the whole business; and there was sketching on the hill, while on another hill opposite, but a long way off, the Prince was seen like a black speck, creeping to get a shot at the deer. It is not easy to discover from her Majesty's journal whether she or the Prince enjoyed their visit most; but her Majesty records her sadness when she rode for the last time on the mountain pony Arghait

Bean (presented to her afterwards by the Duke of Athole) and took leave of him and the faithful Sandy M'Ara.

Writing to King Leopold on the 28th of September the Queen said: "The place possesses every attraction you can desire, shooting, fishing, beautiful scenery, great liberty and retirement, and delicious air." A few days before Prince Albert had written to the Dowager Duchess of Coburg: "We are all well, and live a somewhat primitive, yet romantic mountain life, that acts as a tonic to the nerves, and gladdens the heart of a lover like myself of field sports and of nature. Pussy's cheeks are on the point of bursting, they have grown so red and plump; she is learning Gaelic, but makes wild work with the names of the mountains. We leave this on the 1st and expect by 6 P.M. of the 3d to reach Windsor, where, after a preliminary training on the sea, the bold deer-stalking mountaineer will have to transform himself into a courtier, to receive and entertain the King of the French, and play the part of a staid and astute diplomatist."

On the 3d of October the court had returned to Windsor, and on the 8th Prince Albert, accompanied by the Duke of Wellington, went to meet the King of the French, who had arrived at Portsmouth with the Duc de Montpensier and some of his ministers. The British public, notwithstanding the recent troubles about Tahiti, seemed ready to accord a hearty welcome to Louis Philippe, whom they evidently preferred to the czar, and the mayor and corporation of the seaport presented him with an address, to which he responded adroitly enough.

Lady Lyttelton's description of the arrival at the castle is pretty well known, but it will bear repetition for its graphic quaintness. "At two o'clock he arrived, this curious king; worth seeing if ever a body was! The Queen having graciously

permitted me to be present, I joined the court in the corridor, and we waited an hour, and then the Queen of England came out of her room, to go and receive the King of France; the first time in history! Her Majesty had not long to wait (in the armoury, as she received him in the state apartments, his own private rooms; very civil). And from the armoury, amidst all the old trophies and knights' armour, and Nelson's bust, and Marlborough's flag, and Wellington's, we saw the first of the escort enter the quadrangle, and down flew the Queen, and we after her, to the outside of the door on the pavement of the quadrangle, just in time to see the escort clattering up, and the carriage close behind. The old man was much moved, I think, and his hand rather shook as he alighted; his hat quite off, and gray hair seen. His countenance is striking, much better than the portraits, and his embrace of the Queen was very parental and nice. Montpensier is a handsome youth, and the courtiers and ministers were well-looking, grave, gentleman-like people. It was a striking piece of *real* history—made one feel and think much."

Doubtless the principals in the event felt and thought much also. The Queen wrote in her journal: "What numbers of emotions and thoughts must fill his breast on coming here!" Certainly if ejaculatory expressions of gratification and admiration were proofs of emotion they were not wanting. "Heavens, how beautiful!" he said as he went up the grand staircase towards his apartments; and when he reappeared at luncheon he was in the highest spirits, not without recollections of his former English experiences, and repeating how happy it made him to be a visitor to the Queen; and when they were looking at the picture-galleries, where he knew every bust and was delighted with every painting, and generally was as lively as ever any

elderly gentleman could be, Heavens, what a pleasure it was to him to give her Majesty his arm!

He was full of frank gaiety mingled with quite touching gratitude, even speaking of the Tahiti affair, of the preposterous notion of its assuming the proportions of a misunderstanding between the two nations. For his part he would much like to be rid of the island altogether. The French only wanted it for their whalers, which he trusted the Marquesas would do for. He drove to the places which had been familiar to him when he was here in earlier years, and he himself directed the postilions which way to take that they might pass the house where he lived for five years with his poor brothers before his marriage. The royal party went to Claremont to lunch, the king all the time delighted with his reception by the people on the route, with the charming, yet familiar, aspect of the country, especially with the appearance of neatness and cleanliness, to all of which he directed his son's attention as he talked on, took off his hat and bowed low, stretching out his hands in response to salutations, and generally, as afterwards at Windsor Park and Virginia Water, professed to be delighted and enchanted with everything. It was not surprising that on his return from this excursion he should express gratification, or that, as he sat at dinner, he should tell the Queen of the time when he was in a school in the Grisons as a teacher under the name of Chabot, receiving twentypence a day, and having to brush his own boots.

On the following day (Sept. 29th) the king was invested by her Majesty with the order of the Garter.

The week's visit came to a close, and the Queen and Prince accompanied his majesty to Portsmouth; but the weather was so unpropitious that at the last moment he determined to go by way of Dover and Calais, a change of route for which Prince

Albert made such prompt and effectual arrangements that the king was able to send the same evening from Dover a parting compliment: "It is only in this admirable country that such a thing can be done." The admiral and officers of the squadron who had accompanied the king to Portsmouth, and fraternized cordially with the English officers there, were disappointed; but the Queen and Prince Albert, who had passed the night on board her Majesty's yacht, consoled them by breakfasting on board the *Gomer*, the frigate which had brought the king over; and when her Majesty proposed the king's health the enthusiasm of the French officers showed that the compensation was loyally appreciated.

The concluding public event in which her Majesty took a personal part that year was the opening of the new Royal Exchange. On the 10th of January, 1838, the previous building had, like its predecessor, the original and venerable exchange erected by Sir Thomas Gresham, been destroyed by fire. The present fine and spacious structure had been erected on an eminently suitable site, and was deemed worthy of being inaugurated by Queen Victoria, as the original building, founded by the munificence of the famous merchant prince, had been honoured by the presence of Queen Elizabeth. At eleven o'clock the procession left Buckingham Palace; the Queen, accompanied by Prince Albert in her state carriage with its eight cream-coloured horses, was attended by Lady Canning and the Earl of Jersey, master of the horse. Other carriages conveying ministers of state and the chief officers of the household preceded her, and the procession ended with an escort of life guards. Her Majesty wore a tiara of diamonds, a robe of white satin, and a mantle of ermine. Prince Albert was in the uniform of a colonel of artillery. Along the line of route the

crowded streets were gaily decorated, every window was filled with well-dressed people. At Temple Bar the lord-mayor and civic authorities, robed and wearing the insignia of office, awaited her Majesty, and after the customary presentation of the keys and sword preceded her to the new building. On alighting, the Queen and the Prince were conducted by the lord-mayor and his sword-bearer round the quadrangle, across the ambulatory, and then up to Lloyd's merchants' room, through the underwriters' room to the reading-room, where, seated on a throne and surrounded by the brilliant company, her Majesty received an address which was read by the recorder. Her Majesty replied by expressing the pleasure it gave her "to behold the restoration of this noble edifice which my royal ancestors regarded with favour and which I esteem worthy of my care. The relief of the indigent, the advancement of science, the extension of commerce were the objects contemplated by the founder of the exchange. These objects are near to my heart, and their attainment will, I trust, be recorded among the peaceful triumphs of my reign." Turning to the lord-mayor, her Majesty said: "It is my intention, Mr. Magnay, to confer the dignity of a baronet upon you to commemorate the event;" and then addressing the home secretary, she added, "Sir James Graham, see that the patent is prepared." The company then returned to the underwriters' room, where a sumptuous *déjeuner* was laid for 1300 guests. The toasts of her Majesty, Prince Albert, and the royal family having been duly honoured, those of the lord-mayor and of the city of London were announced, and the Queen joined in the last toast with a simple vivacity which delighted the civic hosts. Her Majesty with the Prince then went down to the great quadrangle of the building, where, surrounded by the illustrious visitors, the heralds having made

proclamation, she received a slip of parchment from Sir James Graham, and in an audible voice said, "It is my royal will and pleasure that this building be hereafter called 'the Royal Exchange.'" After a few words of courtesy to the lord-mayor and Mr. Tite, the architect, her Majesty took the arm of the Prince and proceeded to her carriage to return to Buckingham Palace amidst repeated demonstrations of affectionate loyalty. Writing to King Leopold next day the Queen said, "The procession there, as well as the proceedings at the Royal Exchange, were splendid and royal in the extreme. It was a fine and gratifying sight to see the myriads of people assembled, more than at the coronation even, and all in such good humour, and so loyal. I seldom remember being so pleased with any public show, and my beloved Albert was most enthusiastically received by the people. . . . The articles in the papers, too, are most kind and gratifying. They say no sovereign was ever more loved than I am (I am bold enough to say), and *this* because of our happy domestic home, and the good example it presents."

This conclusion was still further verified when in the following month her Majesty and the Prince went through Northampton, that "centre of Radicalism," on their way to visit the Marquis of Exeter at Burleigh; but, as Lord Spencer had emphatically reminded a Liberal audience, the constitutional attitude which her Majesty maintained in relation to political parties was also a strong ground for the confidence and respect with which she was popularly regarded.

When Sir Robert Peel brought forward his financial statement early in February, 1845, he showed a surplus of £5,800,000, and, confident in the elasticity of the trade and resources of the country, at once abolished export duties and the import duties

on a very great number of articles which had previously paid to the customs revenue, but the liberation of which would, he believed, benefit the poorer classes of the community. He proposed to retain the income-tax for three years longer, and to increase the navy estimates, so that ships might be provided for the more adequate protection of the Channel and the addition of three vessels on foreign stations.

There was a passage in the speech of the premier which must have been personally satisfactory to the Queen, and was not unappreciated by parliament and the country. The reforms and wise economies which had been effected in the management of the royal household had already made so considerable a reduction in expenditure that Sir Robert Peel was able, in illustration of some of his remarks, to say:—"Any executive government that would have a due regard to the exercise of a wise and judicious economy could not do better than follow the example which has been set them by the control exercised over her own expenditure by the Sovereign. A settlement was made of the civil list on her accession to the throne. On the occasion of her marriage no addition was made to that civil list. It has pleased God to bless that marriage by the birth of four children, which has made a considerable additional demand upon the civil list. In the course of last year three sovereigns visited this country, two of them the most powerful sovereigns in the habitable globe—the Emperor of Russia and the King of the French. Those visits of necessity created a considerable increase of expenditure; but through that wise system of economy, which is the only source of true magnificence, her Majesty was enabled to meet every charge, and to give a reception to those sovereigns which struck everyone by its magnificence, without adding one tittle to the burdens of the

country. And I am not required on the part of her Majesty to press for the extra expenditure of one single shilling on account of these unforeseen causes of increased expenditure."

This intimation, which could only have been publicly made by the premier, was not only satisfactory, but opportune and appropriate, as arrangements had just been completed for the purchase by her Majesty of a very attractively situated residence, standing in an estate of 800 acres, at Osborne, in the Isle of Wight. The Queen and the Prince had been very desirous of possessing a private residence not too far from London, to enable them to go to and from the metropolis in a few hours, and yet with the advantages of real retirement and the benefit of sea air. The mansion and estate at Osborne had been commended to the notice of the Queen by Sir Robert Peel, and her Majesty and the Prince went to see it at the time that they accompanied the King of the French to Portsmouth. The Queen wrote after she had taken possession:—"It is impossible to see a prettier place, with woods and valleys, and points of view which would be beautiful anywhere, but when these are combined with the sea (to which the woods grow down) and a beach which is quite private, it is really everything one could wish." The sea view from Osborne is very fine, with Portsmouth and Spithead in the background; and the estate was such as to give an excellent opportunity for Prince Albert to design the laying out of the grounds with such artistic skill as to make the best of their most beautiful features. The purchase of the original estate, which belonged to Lady Isabella Blatchford, was soon negotiated, and to the 800 acres were added adjoining land bought from time to time until the property reached its present extent of 2300 acres, and here as at Windsor the Prince enjoyed not only the artistic delight of landscape-gardening, but the practical pleasure of

model scientific farming, which he contrived to make pay for the improvements that he introduced, and even to yield a profit on the outlay. The place grew in beauty every year, and it had a real home-like character. The Queen records how, in the happy peaceful walks that she and the Prince took together in the woods, he loved to listen for the songs of the nightingales, and would whistle to them in their own long peculiar note, which they invariably answered. The happy royal pair would often stand out on the balcony at night to hear their song. The balcony referred to is that of the present residence, for the mansion-house was found to be too small for the royal establishment, and in June, 1845, only three or four months after the purchase, the first stone of the new house was laid, the building having been planned by the Prince, and erected by Mr. Thomas Cubitt. There was a true charm to the Queen and the Prince in the sense of ownership of this pleasant retreat, without dependence on a department of the government or the state. Even as early as March, 1845, her Majesty wrote to King Leopold:—"It sounds so pleasant to have a place of one's own, quiet and retired and free from all Woods and Forests, and other charming departments, which really are the plague of one's life."

Her Majesty recognized with sympathy and admiration the courage and honesty of purpose which sustained Sir Robert Peel at a time when by his financial measures and the remission of duties he appeared to be departing from his former policy and to be making concessions which his own supporters affirmed were evidences that he was entering on a gradual but significant adoption of "free-trade." He had to contend not only with a powerful opposition, but with those members of the Tory party who were now ready to join their reproaches and invectives to the indefatigable representations of their

opponents, who by the operation of the Anti-Corn-law League were raising throughout the country a formidable organization against a government already in a precarious condition. Only Peel's constancy and self-command could have sustained his position; and his fearless determination to act according to his convictions without regard to the charges of perversion brought against him, confirmed the esteem in which his character was held by her Majesty and the Prince. The Queen, writing to Sir Robert intimating her intention of acting as sponsor to his grandchild, the son of Lord and Lady Villiers, inclosed a letter which she had received from King Leopold speaking in warm terms of his policy. In reply, the premier, thanking the Queen for the favour which she proposed to confer on Lady Peel and himself, said, referring to the king's letter, that he locked for no other reward apart from her Majesty's favourable opinion than that posterity should confirm the judgment of King Leopold that he was a true and faithful servant of the Queen, and used the power committed to him for the maintenance of the honour and just prerogatives of the crown and the advancement of the public welfare. This was in accordance with his later decision when the Queen caused to be conveyed to him the intimation that she would be pleased to confer upon him the order of the Garter. Thanking her Majesty most gratefully for the honour she proposed to bestow upon him, he begged permission to decline it, unless his acceptance would forward the measure he had in hand, and thereby advance the service of the Sovereign. It was well known that he possessed her Majesty's confidence, and the general impression to that effect would not be strengthened by this mark of her favour. He sprang from the people and was essentially of the people, and such an honour in his case would be misapplied.

The measure to which the prime-minister was then devoting himself was one which tested not only his qualities of determination and self-control, but his political ability and address in carrying a bill against a large section of his own party—that which had formerly owned him as their leader, but was now arrayed against him under Sir Robert Inglis.

Ireland was the great difficulty of the government, and the so-called Maynooth Bill then brought forward was largely associated with some of the endeavours that were made to improve the relations between the two countries.

The Roman Catholic college of Maynooth, in which young men were educated for the priesthood, had for fifty years received a parliamentary grant of £9000 a year; but this had long been inadequate to maintain and extend the institution, or even to keep in repair the college building. Sir Robert Peel, therefore, proposed to increase the grant to £30,000, in accordance with the repeated petitions of the Roman Catholic clergy.

It was also proposed to establish Queen's Colleges at Belfast, Cork, and Galway, which should be open for secular education to all students, without religious distinction. Of course the opposition by the extreme Protestant party was violent and determined, and though most of the Whigs were constrained to support the measure, some of them, and among them Lord Macaulay, taunted the premier and his supporters with the opposition displayed by those on whom they had relied to defeat endeavours made by the Liberal party in defence of religious liberty. The excitement in London and some of the large towns was tremendous; and the extreme Roman Catholic clergy and laity endorsed the declaration of Sir Robert Inglis, that the proposed Queen's Colleges were a gigantic scheme

of godless education. But notwithstanding all the opposition the bill passed; and the colleges, which continued to be nicknamed "the godless colleges," were established. It may be mentioned that Mr. William Ewart Gladstone, who was then rising to distinction in parliament, and by his great financial and economical ability had materially assisted Sir Robert Peel in the important fiscal measures of his government, felt obliged to resign his office as president of the board of trade in consequence of his having expressed opinions in a treatise on the relations of the state with the church, which he thought precluded him from being pledged as a minister to support the measure, though as an independent member he voted in its favour.

In the first month of the year her Majesty and the Prince with their suite had accepted an invitation to pay a visit to the Duke of Buckingham at Stowe, where they were received with magnificent hospitality, but could only remain for two days. After returning to Windsor Castle for a short time they went to Strathfieldsaye, where the Duke of Wellington had long looked forward to the pleasure of receiving the Sovereign whose predecessors he had so faithfully served in war and in peace, and to whom he was as loyally devoted now that her children had learned to know him as he had been when he was present at her first council. The entertainments at Strathfieldsaye were probably somewhat quiet, and perhaps even a little formal, but the Prince got some shooting, and the old duke could still tramp over the fields and carry a gun. There was company, of course, but apparently the duke's delight was to realize that the young Queen was truly his guest. He took her in to dinner and sat by her Majesty, and after dinner would rise and say, "With your Majesty's permission, I give the health of her Majesty;" and

then went through a similar form in proposing the health of the Prince. The distinguished guests would then adjourn to the library, where the duke would sit on the sofa by the Queen, and talk to her for a great part of the evening, while the band of the duke's Grenadier regiment played in a large conservatory beyond. We are not informed what were the subjects of conversation with which the duke amused her Majesty, but he could be amusing enough and tell some good stories with much dry humour, and his reminiscences must have extended to society already old enough to have become historical.

On the 6th of June her Majesty entertained a brilliant assembly at a fancy-dress ball at Buckingham Palace. Like former assemblies of the kind, one principal reason for this entertainment was to give a fillip to trade, and though it was far less costly and magnificent than the famous Plantagenet Ball, it was extremely picturesque and admirably arranged. The period represented by those who took part in it was from 1740 to 1750, and from the prevalence of hair-powder or powdered wigs, it was spoken of as "the Powder Ball." The assembly was chiefly distinguished, however, for the magnificent lace worn by ladies, the representatives of ancient families, with whom lace and diamonds were heirlooms, or who had come into possession of treasures of this kind which had historical interest.

At all events, the world of beauty, rank, and fashion was here represented by great dames and graceful damsels who rustled in garments made to represent the mode of their great-great-grandmothers, and adorned with jewels the value of which would have represented more than a king's ransom of a bygone age. Her Majesty wore a dress of cloth of gold and cloth of silver, wrought with silken daisies and poppies, and trimmed with superb old lace and ornamented with jewels and the star and riband of the

Garter; on her head a diamond tiara. Prince Albert wore a suit of the early Georgian period, crimson velvet and white satin, edged and brocaded with gold. Prince Leiningen, the Queen's brother, a white suit faced with blue, and a buff waistcoat silver-laced. The Duchess de Nemours, the cousin of Prince Albert, wore rose-coloured Chinese damask with point d'Alençon and silver, and gloves and shoes embroidered with fleurs-de-lys. The duke, her husband, appeared in the old uniform of a French general of infantry, white and gold; Prince George of Cambridge as a cavalry officer of 1740. The earlier dances were mostly of a stately kind, the German polonaises being followed by a set of minuets, in the first four of which the Queen took part. Her Majesty's partners were Prince Albert, the Duc de Nemours, Prince Leiningen, and Prince George of Cambridge; and the ball, as usual, ended with Sir Roger de Coverley.

On the 23d of June the royal party, who were at Osborne, attended a grand naval review at Spithead, where the Lords of the Admiralty and a number of distinguished visitors witnessed the very imposing evolutions of the fleet. The Queen arrived on the 21st, and was received on board the *St. Vincent*, and the royal party afterwards visited the *Trafalgar* and the *Albion*. On the 23d, on the royal yacht reaching Spithead, the yards of all the ships were manned and a general salute was fired. Never since the peace of 1815 had the roadstead exhibited such an amount of naval strength, yet all has since that time undergone a complete change, and the British navy of to-day bears no resemblance to that which then elicited so many expressions of satisfaction as her Majesty, at the conclusion of the display, passed through the squadron on her return to Cowes.

The Queen had for some time desired to visit Ireland, and had hoped that after the prorogation of Parliament this year

she might carry the wish into effect, but there were still some objections to her undertaking the excursion. There was no reason to doubt the loyalty and good-will of the Irish people, but the condition of the country was such as to make it desirable again to defer the visit. The seceders from O'Connell had now become his vindictive opponents. Though it was not to be concluded that the real opinions of those who had been his junior colleagues and were to be his successors were represented by all that their wild and whirling words implied, agrarian crime had seriously increased, and it was believed that some exceptional measures would have to be taken to enforce the law against those who incited their followers to deeds of violence. At the same time there were signs of greater want and suffering among the Irish peasantry. An inclement spring and a wet summer foreboded a poor harvest, and there were appalling symptoms of a disease by which the potato crop would be destroyed.

As early as May the corporation of Dublin had presented an address to her Majesty, in which they declared that the mere rumour that she intended to visit Ireland had filled every heart with gladness, and that warmly as she had been greeted elsewhere, her Irish subjects should not be exceeded in the true and hearty welcome which, with united voice, should hail her on landing on their shores. The Queen, however reluctantly, had to leave the date of her intended visit uncertain, though in reply to the address she was able to give the assurance that "whenever she might be enabled to visit Ireland to receive the promised welcome, she should rely with confidence upon the loyalty and affection of her faithful subjects."

Another holiday tour had been proposed, in which the Queen was necessarily greatly interested—a visit by way of the Rhine

to Saxony—to the birthplace of her beloved husband, and the home of her maternal ancestors.

There were no urgent affairs of state compelling the holiday to be restricted to a few days only, and the tour might occupy the autumn recess, as her Majesty would at no point be more than two days' journey from London, and would be accompanied by Lord Aberdeen, a cabinet minister, and Lord Liverpool, beside the ladies Gainsborough and Canning, Mr. Anson and Sir James Clark, who were in the royal suite. On the 8th of August the Queen left Osborne, parting from her four children with a rather heavy heart. "Poor little Vicky seemed very sorry, but did not cry. . . . It was a painful moment with the three poor little things standing at the door. . . . We reached Buckingham Palace at one. Everything so deserted and lonely here, and I miss the poor children so much."

On the following day her Majesty prorogued Parliament in person, and in the evening sailed with the Prince and their suite from Woolwich to Antwerp in very rough weather, probably much to the discomfiture of poor Lord Aberdeen, who was not much of a sailor, and it was said suffered considerably during these yachting excursions.

From Antwerp, where they were received with hearty demonstrations, the royal party went by railway to Malines, whence the King and Queen of the Belgians accompanied them to Verviers. At the Prussian frontier the train was met by Lord Westmoreland, our Prussian ambassador, Chevalier Bunsen, and gentlemen of the Prussian court, and at Aix-la-Chapelle by the king and the princes of the royal house; an assemblage of the clergy, and a number of young ladies dressed in white, one of whom recited some appropriate verses, assisting in the welcome. At Cologne, where the visitors drove to see the cathedral, the narrow streets were filled

with an enthusiastic crowd, and part of the carriage route was sprinkled with eau-de-Cologne, a delicate attention, the full significance of which was not explained.

The Queen's own vivacious and picturesque notes of this journey, which appear in *The Life of the Prince Consort*, convey not only a clear and accurate account of the impression produced by the delightful scenery of the Rhineland and of Saxony, but of the people and the quaint costumes and observances, the village fêtes, no less than the splendid state receptions—the manner and appearance of peasants and townsfolk, as well as the aspects of princes and dignitaries at court ceremonials. We have noted that the King of Prussia was regarded as a kindly, pleasant man, and people here as well as in other places regarded him as a gentleman of the dilettante order, without much moral or mental strength of character, but with taste, and what is called "culture." He was somewhat self-indulgent, easy-going, and with a liking for the "pleasures of the table," which led to his being nicknamed "Clicquot," from a famous "brand" of champagne, of which he was reputed to be fond.

At all events he was a graceful and superbly hospitable host, and the royal visitors, on their arrival at Bruhl, were conveyed to the palace, where the Queen and the Princess of Prussia, Archduke Frederick of Austria, and the whole court received them in state. The stay at the sumptuous though rather "rococo" palace was marked by a round of splendid festivities; but it may be well believed that the Queen was most delighted with her visits to Bonn, where she went to see the little house in which Prince Albert had lived when he was a student at the university. Many of his old friends and tutors were presented to the Queen, for there was a reception and a grand musical festival, with the unveiling of a statue of Beethoven, of which her Majesty could

only see the back from the place where she and the Prince witnessed the ceremonies. There were great banquets at the palace at Bruhl, at the first of which the king in felicitous terms proposed the toast of the Queen and of "her august Consort," clinking glasses with Prince Albert in the German fashion, a recognition of the rank and high distinction of the Prince, which the Queen acknowledged by bowing lower than at the mention of her own name, and by rising and kissing the king on the cheek the moment after the dual toast had been honoured. The illumination of Cologne and the state concerts were exceedingly grand, and one given on the last evening of her Majesty's stay was conducted by Meyerbeer, who had composed a cantata in honour of our Queen, and in which among the performers were Liszt, Jenny Lind, Madame Viardot, Staudigl, and Pischek.

The journey of all the royalties up the Rhine to the king's castle at Stolzenfels, with its exquisite surrounding scenery, and the continuation of the journey by the Queen in the royal yacht to Mayence, completed the river voyage. At Mayence the Queen and Prince were met by Prince William of Prussia and his son-in-law Prince Charles of Hesse, and dined with Prince William at his residence *Das Deutsche Haus*. The Queen received a number of royal and other visitors on the following day, and among those introduced to her Majesty was Prince Louis of Hesse, "a very fine boy of eight—nice and full of intelligence." One of the persons who attended on the occasion—and the meeting must have had in it a humorous element—was Madame Heidenreich, née Charlotte Siebold, the lady who had been professionally present at the birth both of the Queen and Prince Albert, and had seen neither of them since.

The journey to Coburg was continued by road through Bavaria, where they were royally received, and travelled amidst

delightful and varied scenery. As they approached the Coburg frontier the Queen was agitated by the sentiments which were associated with the place, and the manner of the reception was calculated to add to her emotion. Duke Ernest came forth in full uniform to meet them, and sat with them in a carriage drawn by six horses; the people, all in holiday attire, the women wearing pointed caps and many petticoats, and the men jackets and leather breeches, were drawn up in lines to bid them welcome with hearty good-will. There were girls with wreaths of flowers, and under a triumphal arch the royal party drove to Ketschendorf, the house of the well-remembered name, the former abode of the dear old grandmother who, while she lived, had so loved the "little Mayflower." There they found "Uncle Leopold and Louise," who got into the carriage with them, Ernest mounting a horse and riding on the side of the carriage next the Queen, with Alvensleben on the other side, and the suite and a procession following. At the entrance of the town, the burgomaster almost broke down with emotion while addressing them, and young girls dressed in white with green wreaths and scarfs presented bouquets and verses. The picturesque old town was *en fête*, and at the palace, where more young girls threw wreaths into the carriage, the Duchess of Kent, the Duchess and Dowager-duchess of Coburg, and a staircase full of cousins awaited the honoured guests.

"It was an affecting but exquisite moment which I shall never forget," writes the Queen, and she was in the midst of a people who, of all people in the world, could appreciate and well interpret such sentiments as those that swelled her heart. There was a shade of sadness too in memory of the father of the Prince, who had so longed to welcome them at the old home, but there was a world of delight in visiting the various

places, each of which was the centre of numberless associations for the Prince and his brother: in dwelling at the Rosenau, and exploring the little upper rooms where the infant princes slept, and where the table on which they used to stand to be dressed remained with other plain and bare furniture. The whole atmosphere of the place, the charming woodland scenery so often described by the Prince, and the succession of simple yet striking and interesting excursions, outdoor fêtes, concerts, and delightful domestic festivities, sustained the charm that gave change and variety but also a certain spiritual familiarity to surrounding scenes. The crowning point of the pleasure was that the 26th of August, the birthday of Prince Albert, was celebrated at the place where he first "looked about him like a little squirrel."

Gotha had to be visited, where the other grandmother, the dowager-duchess, awaited the royal family party at her palace at Friedrichsthal. There also there was a popular welcome, and, still with a tender memory of recent bereavement, there were fêtes as simple but even more imposing than those at Coburg. There was the *Schützenfest*, the shooting-festival, with its procession of horsemen and of women and children in wagons hung with flowers and branches, and the *Liederfest*, the song-festival, where, in an enormous orchestra in the park opposite the castle, hundreds of voices sang fine German songs to the royalties who occupied a great tribune or pavilion. The "royalties" included a numberless throng of dukes, duchesses, princes, and princesses, who had come to pay their respects to the Queen of England. This and the great procession which they had witnessed at Coburg, when 1300 children of the schools paraded in quaint costumes and fancy dresses on the fête of St. Gregorius, and sang to the

Queen, and played and danced in a great meadow in front of two open garlanded tents where the royal party sat and dined—must have been among the best-remembered sights. In reading of this holiday the air seems to be full of music and the odour of flowers, the scent of the pines in the glorious Thuringian forest, and the sounds of cheerful voices of a multitude of people occupied with changeful sport and the manifestation of homely affection and courtesy; amidst which we see the figure of the young Queen of England going here and there, sometimes to sketch a rustic group, or some pretty children, or a servant in a quaint dress; and we seem to be watching the Queen and Prince walking quietly alone together as they did on the afternoon of Albert's birthday, when they strolled along a path in the valley to see the haymakers.

But there came the time for parting, and farewells had to be said, and it was grievous, especially to the old grandmother at Gotha, who still called Albert her "angel child." There were more receptions and signs of hearty good-will on the journey back to the Rhine, but the holiday was then becoming only a dear and cherished memory and the faces of the travellers were turned towards home. The mother's heart was craving for her children. At Antwerp there were illuminations, and the town was gaily adorned; but there was no staying there; for French susceptibilities were in front again, and Louis Philippe had entreated that a flying visit should again be made to Tréport, off which the yacht arrived at nine o'clock on the morning of the 8th of September, and was immediately boarded by the king, Prince Joinville, Guizot, and the rest. Then there was landing in the king's barge, which, instead of going into the port, went outside, and the royal visitors had to be dragged over the sands in a bathing-machine, which the Queen says did very well, though she also

records that a number of poor men and women had to pull the boat up to the machine. The visit, at the Queen's request, was to be less ceremonious than the previous one, and the king said it was only a friendly call; but for all that the reception at the château was magnificent, and the whole company of the Opera Comique had been brought from Paris to give a dramatic entertainment in a temporary theatre in the grounds. Next evening the royal party re-embarked, the king and his gentlemen accompanying them on board. It was while Prince Albert was showing Joinville the smaller yacht—the *Fairy*—that his Majesty remained talking to the Queen and Lord Aberdeen. The conversation again turned, or was led by him, to the proposed Spanish marriages, and he declared that he never would hear of the marriage of Montpensier with the Infanta of Spain till it was no longer a political question, which would be when the Queen of Spain married and had children.

It had been a happy holiday indeed. "The recollections of the time spent in Saxony are engraven on my heart," her Majesty wrote. "It was one of the happiest times of my life, and to recur to it will ever bring me the greatest happiness. I must be thankful for having been allowed to see what I hardly dared hope for." But there was happiness existing at home too, for amidst the mellow haze of an autumn afternoon the royal travellers landed at the beach at Osborne, and there, as they drove up to the house, stood the four rosy children ready with the dearest welcome in the world.

CHAPTER V.

The Queen and Political Events. Repeal of the Corn-laws. Birth of Princess Helena. Scinde. The Punjab. Spanish Marriages. Famine in Ireland. Abdication of Louis Philippe. Birth of Princess Louise. Chartist Meetings. Balmoral. Visit to Ireland. Birth of Prince Arthur. Great Exhibition. The Queen and Palmerston. Death of the Duke of Wellington. Birth of Prince Leopold. Napoleon III. War with Russia. The Queen in Paris. Birth of Princess Beatrice. The Victoria Cross.

The Queen on her return from the visit to Saxony found the ministry approaching a political crisis, Sir Robert Peel having already recognized the necessity for introducing a measure which would be one of the most important events in modern history.

The narrative contemplated in these pages is that of the life of our Sovereign Lady, and does not assume to be even an index or outline of the past fifty years of English history; but the decade which we now have to consider was marked by some great national and political events in which her Majesty may be said to have been directly and personally concerned, and it will therefore be desirable to devote the present chapter to a brief record of them.

In May (1845) a great Free-trade Bazaar, under the auspices of the Anti-Corn-law League, was held at Covent Garden Theatre, where examples of various manufactures and productions were exhibited, and stalls for the sale of all kinds of useful and ornamental articles were presided over by a number of ladies. There were musical performances, speeches, and other attractions, and during the week that the bazaar continued it was visited by above 100,000 persons, and £25,000

was added to the funds of the League. Large sums had been contributed by commercial firms and private persons at the numerous meetings all over the country, and books, publications, pamphlets, and "fly-leaves" were distributed by the million.

Peel foresaw, notwithstanding the general distress, with the prospect of a poor harvest, that he would have a hard battle with his own ministry, and would certainly be deserted by protectionists if he proposed even the temporary opening of the ports and the free admission from abroad of the food for which numbers of the people were already starving.

But the door that had remained shut against political and popular demands was opened to the summons of famine. On the 13th of October Sir Robert Peel had avowed to Sir James Graham that the failure of the potato crop in Ireland was so alarming that the removal of impediments to the importation of corn would be the only effectual alleviation of impending want and misery. In Ireland pestilence was fast following famine, and it soon became evident that there should be no delay in opening the ports and distributing food.

Sir Robert Peel hesitated even amidst the outcry which now resounded through the country, for he knew that he would not be able to command unanimity in the cabinet, and he doubted whether he could obtain a majority in parliament. Lord John Russell, who was in Edinburgh, seized the opportunity of publishing a letter to the electors of the city of London, in which he declared that it was no longer worth while to contend for a small fixed duty, as the imposition of any duty, without a provision for its early extinction, would only prolong a contest already sufficiently fruitful of animosity and discontent. "Let us then," he said, "unite to put an end to a system which has proved to be the blight of commerce, the bane of agriculture,

the source of bitter divisions amongst classes, the cause of penury, fever, mortality, and crime among the people."

Peel had still been unable to move his colleagues. An order in council would have sufficed to open the ports, but even this was denied to him; and though nearly all the members of the cabinet had now come to his opinions, he could not make further efforts to adopt a policy which had been openly declared by his political rival. By some means a whisper had been conveyed to the editor of the *Times* on the 3d of December, that the cabinet, which had met that day, had been broken up by the opposition of Lord Stanley (afterwards Earl of Derby), and on the following morning a leading article in "the leading journal" commenced with the words, "The doom of the corn-laws is sealed." On the 5th of December Sir Robert Peel was at Osborne to place his resignation in the hands of the Queen. Her Majesty accepted it, but not without expressions of regret and approbation, which made it very painful for the minister to replace in her Majesty's hands the trust she had confided to him.

It cannot be wondered at that the Queen was most reluctant to part with Sir Robert, and it has been pretty well established that she earnestly desired the immediate remission of those duties which prevented the relief of the wants of the people, so that we cannot wonder at her expression of pleasure when the failure of Lord John Russell to form a ministry, and the refusal of Lord Stanley and other dissentients to make the attempt, rendered it necessary to send for Peel and ask him to withdraw his resignation. On his entering the room at Windsor Castle her Majesty said to him, "So far from taking leave of you, Sir Robert, I must require you to withdraw your resignation and to remain in my service."

Though Sir Robert Peel had promised to do all in his power to support a Whig ministry in passing a reasonable measure for the admission of foreign corn, it was very doubtful whether even if that ministry had been formed it could have carried the repeal of the duties. The free-traders had begun to believe in Peel more than in Russell, and many of the Whigs were still obstinately bent on maintaining a small fixed duty. On the other hand, it was more than doubtful whether the House of Lords, and particularly Wellington, would have agreed to accept from a Whig ministry a measure to which the majority of them were bitterly opposed.

Therefore when Peel had succeeded in forming a ministry in which the place of Lord Stanley at the colonial office was taken by Mr. Gladstone, the satisfaction of her Majesty was twofold. The minister for whom she had great respect, and in whose ability and integrity she had reason to place confidence, had resumed office, and the desired measure would be more likely to surmount the opposition with which it was threatened by the Protectionist party, whose titular leader was to be Lord George Bentinck, of whom Mr. Disraeli was the active and potent lieutenant. So high did party feeling rise that when Prince Albert, desiring to hear a fine debate, went to the House of Commons to listen to the introduction by Sir Robert of the financial policy which included the virtual abolition of the corn-laws, Lord George Bentinck, representing the extreme Tory party, said that the Prince "listened to ill advice . . . when he allowed himself to be seduced by the first minister of the crown to come down to the house to usher in, to give *éclat*, and, as it were, by reflection from the Queen, to give the semblance of a personal sanction of her Majesty" to the measure. This accusation, however, had little or no hold on the outside public. The conduct of the

Queen, her entire impartiality and frank but judiciously independent recognition of her own position amidst the strife of party and her sympathy with the crying needs of the country called forth general admiration even among those who were the exponents of what were called Radical opinions.

Peel maintained his lofty courage and calm determination amidst the storm of abuse with which he was assailed. He must have found support in the knowledge that the cry for free-trade in the article of food was to be found among starving agricultural labourers as well as amidst the artisans of manufacturing towns and the perishing peasantry of Ireland, and he was able to say, "I do not desire to be the minister of England, but while I am minister of England I will hold office by no servile tenure. I will hold office unshackled by any other obligation than that of consulting the public interest, and providing for the public safety."

On the 15th of May, 1846, the measure for the repeal of the corn-laws was carried in the House of Commons. A temporary nominal duty depending on prices was to be continued till 1849, when the duty was to be totally abolished. Practically the battle of free-trade in corn was won, and duties were repealed or reduced on other articles of food. Mr. Cobden and Mr. Bright, the latter having been returned to the House of Commons, spoke in terms of high and sincere eulogium of the minister who had the courage to uphold his convictions, in spite of the attacks of those who had once been his adherents, and in face of the certainty of being compelled to retire from office on some question on which parties at variance on the free-trade question would combine against him.

The measure had yet to pass the House of Lords, and that it did pass without prolonged opposition was greatly due to

the influence of Wellington, who remembered the lesson of the Reform Bill, and took up a similar position to that which he had then assumed. The old warrior knew well that capitulation was inevitable, and he was for coming out with all the honours of war. His principle still was, that to maintain the settled government of the country was of more importance than any measure whatever, and that useless resistance was unpatriotic and disloyal. "Bad opinion of the bill, my lord!" he said to a Protectionist peer; "you can't have a worse opinion of it than I have; but it was recommended from the throne, it has passed the Commons by a large majority, and we must all vote for it. The Queen's government must be supported."

The Anti-Corn-law League had done its work and its affairs were to be closed. At a meeting at the town-hall, Manchester, Richard Cobden addressed a great meeting of its leaders, where, speaking of Sir Robert Peel, he said, "If he has lost office, he has gained a country. For my part I would rather descend into private life with that last measure of his in my hand than mount to the highest pinnacle of human power." The proceedings were closed by three hearty cheers for her Majesty, to whom, Mr. Cobden reminded the meeting, they were under obligation, since the Queen had been said to have favoured their cause as one of humanity and justice.

Sir Robert Peel knew well that after the passing of the corn bill his government could not stand, nor did he contemplate making any effort to prolong its existence. It was defeated on a measure which had been introduced in the House of Lords by Lord St. Germains, and was down for second reading in the House of Commons on the very night that the corn bill had passed in the Upper House. That measure was a stringent Protection of Life and Property Bill, for the purpose of suppress-

ing conspiracies and seditious assemblies in Ireland, and for checking the alarming increase of assassinations and crimes of violence in that "distressful country."

Peel at once announced that he should retire from office, but while declaring that it was to Cobden, who, with untiring energy and from pure and disinterested motives had advocated their cause, that the success of the measures for repealing the tax on food must be attributed, he hoped that his own name would be remembered with expressions of good-will by men whose lot it was to labour and earn their daily bread by the sweat of their brow, when they recruited their exhausted strength with abundant and untaxed food, the sweeter because it would no longer be leavened with a sense of injustice. When Peel left the house a great number of persons who awaited him outside stood bareheaded and in respectful silence to receive him, and many following at a short distance accompanied him to his own door.

The Queen had taken a few days' respite at Osborne early in the year, but the events of the session had demanded her attention. On the 25th of May, amidst anxieties with regard to foreign and home affairs, and the excitements of the parliamentary struggle, another daughter was born. The christening was deferred till the 25th of July, when it took place at Buckingham Palace, the infant princess being named Helena Augusta Victoria, the first name after that of her godmother, the widowed Hélène, Duchess of Orleans. Her Majesty had much desired the presence of the Queen of the Belgians, but political affairs detained her and the king at Brussels until some days afterwards, and the Duchess of Kent was sponsor for the Duchess of Orleans.

The announcement of the dissolution of the government was accompanied by the news that the long-disputed question between

this country and the United States as to the settlement of the boundary between British and American territory in Oregon had been brought to a satisfactory conclusion. The settlement was proposed by the United States government in such a friendly spirit towards England that Lord Aberdeen submitted a draft of a new convention which the American secretary of state accepted as the basis of a treaty regulating the rights of both countries, and fixing a boundary line between the English and American territory, the land to the north of the boundary belonging to Britain, and that to the south to the United States.

Sir Robert Peel had also been able to announce the termination of another conflict in India, where in 1845 the warlike Sikhs of the Punjab had commenced hostilities. The troubles that followed the Afghan war and the barren occupation of Cabul had scarcely been concluded before hostilities had broken out in Scinde, where a mixed population, consisting mostly of Mahometans, was under the rule of the ameers, who had a standing grievance against the British government. They complained that they had been induced to renounce the transit duties on merchandise going up and down the Indus without realizing those compensating advantages which they had been promised. They took the first opportunity for making an attack on the residence of the British commissioners, and this happened on the very day after a new treaty had been completed. It should be remembered that the rulers of this territory had themselves taken it with the sword, and grievously oppressed the conquered people, and they were now seeking to take advantage of the recent strain upon British arms in Afghanistan to compel our troops to retire from the Indus. This they might have effected if they had known how to order their vastly superior force, or if a general of only ordinary ability had been in command of the

British troops; but our general was the veteran Sir Charles Napier. While the ameers were assembling their forces at Hyderabad, he outmanœuvred Shere Mohammed, and marched forward to take the place; and take it he did, after a battle in which the grand old warrior led his men sword in hand—a battle which has been compared to that of Wellington at Assaye, and in which victory was achieved by sheer hard fighting and the determination that will not be beaten. The consequence was that the country was annexed to the British possessions. Sir Charles Napier was appointed governor of the province of Scinde by Lord Ellenborough. Slavery was abolished, and all duties on transit were removed, the navigation of the Indus being made free. That battle of Meanee had decided the conquest of Scinde; and the Devil's Brother, as the defeated robber tribes called the successful general, was an excellent governor. It may be recalled that the three famous Napiers, William, George, and Charles, were known as Wellington's colonels, and all had scars and wounds as tokens of brilliant services. Their mother was that Lady Sarah Lennox (beloved of George the Third) to whom reference has been made in an earlier page.

No sooner had the conquest of Scinde been effected (though there were repeated troubles there because of the unhealthiness of the climate and the mutinous spirit of some of the Bengal native regiments) than we were at war with the Mahrattas, over whom a victory was gained by Sir Hugh Gough in a terrible battle at Maharajpoor, which ended in the occupation of Gwalior. Lord Ellenborough, whose able but high-handed proceedings had provoked the accusations of some of the Whig leaders in parliament, and the jealousy or pride of the Court of Directors, was recalled, and Sir Henry Hardinge was sent out as governor-general. He began by promoting works of peace, and his

instructions were to avoid as far as possible any hostile attitude in the Punjab; but the Sikhs were a fighting people and their large army was well disciplined and provided. Their court or "durbar" was often a scene of drunkenness and debauchery, and it was said that the death of Runjeet Singh, the old "Lion of Lahore," had been accelerated by his habits of intoxication. The Punjab was in such an unsettled condition that the Sikhs saw that there must be war between them and the British, and as they had a great trained force ready for action, they commenced by crossing the Sutlej, thus violating the British frontier and disregarding their treaty obligations. Hardinge himself had to gird on the sword, and Sir Hugh Gough, who was in command, hastened, with the aid of Sir Robert Sale, who had returned to India, and other officers to Moodkee, where their inferior force, faint and weary with a long march, stormed and took the camp of the enemy at Ferozeshah. Sir Robert Sale and General M'Caskell were killed in this desperate engagement, which, however, was followed by those of Aliwal, Sobraon, and Chillianwallah, and the final defeat of the Sikhs before the arrival of Sir Charles Napier, who, though he had returned to England sick and almost dying, again went forth at the call of duty. The annexation of the Punjab was effected, and the Rajah Golab Singh was sent by the Ranee from Lahore to make terms.

In February, 1846, the young Maharajah Duleep Singh went to the camp of the governor-general and made his submission, returning to Lahore with the governor and the victorious army who occupied the city. Afterwards the British forces marched in triumph to Delhi, carrying with them the trophies and spoils of the sixty days' war. Sir Henry Hardinge and Sir H. Gough were raised to the peerage and received

large pensions, and Lord Dalhousie went to India as governor-general, and distinguished his career by the rapid introduction of improvements in public works, and the institution of railways, and a postal and telegraphic system.

Lord John Russell succeeded in forming a ministry in which both Lord Grey and Lord Palmerston held office, and the former having withdrawn his objections Palmerston became foreign minister. This appointment of Lord Palmerston was particularly distasteful both to Guizot and to Louis Philippe, whose Eastern plans the noble lord had formerly frustrated; and though, while Lord Aberdeen was in office, they might have hesitated (though probably they would not ultimately have abandoned their intention) to break all their promises with regard to the Spanish marriages, they now began to try to find an excuse for evading the repeated verbal engagements made at the Château d'Eu and on board the Queen's yacht.

This excuse they pretended to find in a despatch sent by Lord Palmerston to Mr. Bulwer in Madrid, concerning the question of the marriage of the young Queen of Spain and her sister the Infanta. In that despatch, which contained some Palmerstonian comments, the candidature of Prince Leopold was of course mentioned among other matters, and Guizot cunningly seized upon this to make a groundless representation that as England, contrary to the promises of Aberdeen, was favouring the pretensions of the German prince, the King of the French and his minister were absolved from their declarations. The whole pretence that this was the case appears to have been a plot in which the Queen-dowager Christina of Spain was also concerned; for it was believed that she had first promoted the candidature of the German prince for the purpose of misleading Europe to suppose that England was intriguing in his favour.

The marriages of Isabella of Spain, and her sister the Infanta, to Don Francisco d'Assis, Duke of Cadiz, and the Duc de Montpensier, were announced on the 10th of October, and the French prince stood nearest the succession if the young queen should have no children. It was said that her affections were really engaged by her cousin Don Enrique, the younger brother of Don Francisco, that the latter was very near to being an imbecile, and that the French king knew that no issue of the marriage was to be expected.

The whole affair was so base that our Queen was disgusted—the falsehood so marked that indignation almost overcame her grief that she should have been so deceived by a sovereign to whom she had held out both hands in friendship, and for whose family, and especially for his daughter, the Queen of the Belgians, she entertained a true affection. Unscrupulous as Louis Philippe had been, he must have felt how poor a figure he would now present, and with characteristic cunning he endeavoured to skip over the difficulty by causing his wife, the amiable Amélie, to write to Queen Victoria a friendly letter, dated 8th September, 1846, in which the passive if reluctant concurrence of her Majesty in the marriages there announced was cleverly suggested:

"This family event overwhelms us with joy, because we hope that it will ensure the happiness of our dear son, and that we shall find in the Infanta one daughter the more, as good, as amiable, as those who have preceded her, and who will add to our domestic happiness—the only true happiness in this world, and which you, madame, know so well to appreciate. I ask you, by anticipation, for your friendship for our new child, feeling sure that she will participate in all those sentiments of devotion and affection which we all feel for you, for the Prince Albert, and for all your dear family."

After some particulars of the occupations of the French royal family the letter continued: "I am charged by the king to offer his affectionate and respectful homage to yourself, and his kind regards to Prince Albert. He hopes you have received his letters, and that the peaches have arrived in good condition. All my children also request me to offer you their respectful remembrances. Pray present my kind regards to Prince Albert. Embrace for me all your dear children, and accept the expression of the affectionate and unalterable affection;" and so on.

That reference to the peaches was a touch of art quite in the style of Louis Philippe, and the letter was cunningly devised; but the Queen, though she might be grieved and her sentiments deeply wounded, was not to be bamboozled. She was too shrewd, and had too clear a knowledge of foreign policy, to fail to see that the indignation excited by the falsehood of the King of the French, influenced by his minister, would make it impossible to maintain such cordial relations as would indicate a close alliance between France and England.

In reply to the letter from the Queen of the French, her Majesty wrote: "I have just received your majesty's letter of the 8th inst., and I hasten to thank you for it. You will perhaps remember what passed at Eu between the king and myself; you are aware of the importance which I have always attached to the maintenance of our cordial understanding, and the zeal with which I have laboured towards this end. You have no doubt been informed that we refused to arrange the marriage between the Queen of Spain and our cousin Leopold (which the two queens had eagerly desired) solely with the object of not departing from a course which would be more agreeable to the king, although we could not regard the course as the best. You will therefore easily understand that the sudden announcement of

this double marriage could not fail to cause us surprise and very keen regret.

"I crave your pardon, madame, for speaking to you of politics at a time like this, but I am glad that I can say for myself that I have always been *sincere* with you."

The king was uneasy, and made attempts to justify his conduct in a long and elaborate letter, which he sent to the Queen of the Belgians, that it might be communicated to her Majesty. He seemed to be aiming at the Queen's judgment through her sentiments; but her judgment was too sound to be affected in that way, and her straightforward reply put the whole case so clearly and concisely that it was unanswerable. The Queen said nothing that could prevent the maintenance of a policy of peace, and it was well that this was so, for the feeling not only of statesmen, but of the country, was one of indignation and disgust. Her Majesty and the Prince shared the opinion of those well versed in European affairs, who said that Louis Philippe had so injured his position that even in France he would lose the influence which he had been striving to acquire, while the severance of the support of England would leave him isolated in relation to other nations. "One cannot play small tricks with great countries," was the message sent to Guizot by Metternich; and it is possible that the great diplomatist foresaw that from that moment the King of the French held his own throne by a more uncertain tenure.

The first intelligence of the breach of faith reached her Majesty while returning from the later of a series of yacht excursions from Osborne to Weymouth, Dartmouth and Plymouth, thence to Jersey (where the inhabitants were demonstrative in their loyalty), Falmouth, St. Michael's Mount, and the Duchy of Cornwall, where the little Prince of Wales was enthusiastically

received by the people, who cheered him to the echo as he was held up for them to see, crowds of fishing-boats, filled with the people of the coast, surrounding the yacht. The royal party (among whom was the old friend Stockmar) having made known that there was to be no conventional ceremonial, delightful visits were paid to various points of interest: her Majesty, the Prince, and some of the suite even exploring an iron mine, into which the Queen and the Prince were dragged in one of the trucks by the miners. The loyalty of the people of the duchy, both to the Queen and the two children, was conspicuous, and at Penrhyn the municipal dignitaries made their appearance on the royal yacht and begged to be introduced to "the Duke of Cornwall," upon which the Queen went on deck with the Prince of Wales, who was introduced to the people by Lord Palmerston; and the old mayor said with some emotion that he hoped the prince would grow up to be a blessing to his parents and to the country.

Amidst griefs and anxieties associated with the state and with the more regal or public life of the royal household, there was peace and happiness in the domestic retirement of home, and home in this sense had now come to mean the retreat at Osborne. The secret of this happiness there as elsewhere was constant occupation and a devotion to duty; but there, as sometimes at Windsor, the occupations could be those which were associated with the pursuits in which the Queen and the Prince delighted. There were the gardens and the plantations to design, the farm and aviaries and dairies to look to, there were books to be read and discussed, drawings and paintings to be studied, and amidst some cares of state which came into the daily duties, there was the teaching of the children, the pleasant recreations of family life, and a sustained calm cheerfulness which

was the strong characteristic of the Prince. Their lives were happy in the truth and simplicity of mutual confidence and love.

The portion of the house at Osborne called the Pavilion, which was to be the dwelling of the royal family, was completed, and on the 16th of September was taken possession of for the first time; and Lady Lyttelton records that Miss Lucy Kerr, one of the maids of honour, following the old Scottish custom, threw an old shoe after the Queen as her Majesty entered; also that nobody smelt paint or caught cold. Everything in the house was quite new, and the drawing-room looked very handsome; the windows lighted by the brilliant lamps must have been seen far out at sea. After dinner the members of the household drank the health of the Queen and the Prince, who told them that in Germany there was a hymn of prayer for such occasions, and quoted in German from Luther's amplification of the last verse of the 121st Psalm as it appears in the Coburg *Gesang-Buch.* The lines of the hymn have been translated:—

"God bless our going out, nor less
Our coming in, and make them sure;
God bless our daily bread, and bless
Whate'er we do, whate'er endure:
In death unto his peace awake us,
And heirs of his salvation make us."

In the following year it was very satisfactory to know that the royal finances were so carefully attended to and so well managed, that though Osborne was to cost £200,000 her Majesty would be able to provide for the whole expenses out of her revenue, and that out of the revenues of the Duchy of Cornwall £100,000 had been saved. This is in Mr. Charles Greville's journal, and he professed to have heard it from Mr. Anson, secretary and keeper of the privy-purse to Prince Albert.

One effect of the breach of cordial relations between Louis Philippe and the British government was to weaken the probability of an Anglo-French alliance against high-handed proceedings of other great powers. Therefore Austria, Russia, and Prussia, whose allied forces had occupied Cracow after the suppression of a Polish insurrection in Silesia, took the opportunity to annex the city and territory in entire contradiction to the provisions of the Treaty of Vienna. By that treaty Cracow was to be a free and independent city under the protection of these powers. While France and England were believed to be in unison, and were known to agree in upholding the terms of the treaty, the town after the suppression of the insurrection was alternately occupied by Russian, Austrian, and Prussian troops. Soon this excited suspicion both in France and England, and Lord Palmerston had significantly said in Parliament that it was to be hoped "that the governments of Austria, Russia, and Prussia would recollect that if the Treaty of Vienna was not good on the Vistula it might be equally invalid on the Rhine and on the Po." These words may well have been remembered a few months afterwards, when the three powers, seeing that there was division between France and England, annexed Cracow and the adjoining territory to the empire of Austria, and stamped out the recognition of Polish nationality by revoking and suppressing the provisions of the treaty without consulting either the French or the British government. The flickering flame of Polish independence was trampled down, but in such a way that it gave a spark to that smouldering fire of insurrection which was soon to blaze all over Europe.

The achievement of the Spanish marriages, on which Guizot prided himself as a great and original stroke of statecraft, proved to be altogether calamitous, and before many months had elapsed

had been added to the charges brought against the "Citizen King" and his grasping policy by the Reform party in France. Reform meetings and banquets, for promoting extension of the franchise and of popular liberties, were held in Paris and the large towns, and attempts to prohibit and to suppress them were futile, and incensed the people and the Republican leaders. The first low murmuring of another revolution was in the air.

In Portugal our former acquaintance, Queen Donna Maria, who, in 1836, had married Prince Ferdinand, younger son of the then reigning Duke of Coburg, had also fallen into trouble with her subjects by the despotism of her government, which drove the people to civil war and threatened anarchy. It was, strictly speaking, none of our business; but if we did not, to use a homely expression, have a finger in the pie, Spain undoubtedly would have a finger and thumb, for the Portuguese insurrection was at her very door, and France would undoubtedly have two fingers and a thumb employed, to show that she had a right on behalf of Spain as well as on her own account. Therefore, to continue the simile, we thrust in a hand up to the wrist. There were treaty obligations for it, and for some months all our representative at Lisbon did was to endeavour to mediate between the government and the insurgents, at the same time saying in plain terms that England would neither aid nor permit other aid to be given to a system of misgovernment.

Eventually a basis of negotiations by the British government was accepted, but not till the fleet of the Portuguese insurgents had surrendered on the summons of the British admiral, who was with the united fleet at Oporto, and the city had been invested by Spanish troops sent thither to co-operate with the other powers.

Throughout the period of European revolutions Palmerston

was unmistakably on the side of oppressed peoples and small states or nationalities crushed by larger powers who would not acknowledge "constitutional government," and the time soon came when, amidst the storm and wreck, Britain stood not only as a sheltering but as a vigorous protecting power on the side of what in British language were called constitutional liberties; and Palmerston was the representative statesman of a policy which it was believed, and for a time not without good reason, made this country (as the phrase went) "feared and respected" in Europe.

But Lord Palmerston, though he did not mean fighting, was (to borrow the language of the prize-ring, of which his lordship was something of a patron) always "putting his hands up" on even small provocation. At that time he regarded this country as the policeman of Europe, whose duty it was to do all that was possible to keep watch and to interfere against the encroachments and crimes of foreign governments.

There followed a period, however, when the dangers that are to be feared from such an attitude became serious. Palmerston's own personality was so inseparable from his policy that he was continually putting into despatches comments and opinions that were compromising to the Sovereign, and were not at all unlikely to embarrass, if not to entangle, the government. It was of course impossible that a foreign minister should be alone held responsible by foreign powers, and when it came to despatches and communications being forwarded to our representatives abroad without first being properly submitted to the Queen, so that both her Majesty and the prime-minister might be thoroughly acquainted with their contents and probable consequences, a crisis was sure to arise. Palmerston constantly increased the danger of being unnecessarily embroiled in a

quarrel, because of his desire to give the British constitution, with its restraints and liberties, to other nations. Prince Albert, with his usual acuteness, saw the weak point of Palmerston's policy at a very early date, just as he saw the feeble and futile sentimentalism of the King of Prussia, when that sovereign affected to form a constitution that would be acceptable to his people.

"I am strongly of opinion," he wrote to Stockmar, "that England should declare betimes, that it *will not endure* that independent states should be forcibly prevented from setting about such internal reforms as they shall think for their advantage. This appears to me the sound basis for us, placed as we are towards Germany, Switzerland, and Italy. We are frequently inclined to plunge states into constitutional reforms towards which they have no inclination. This I hold to be *quite wrong* (*vide* Spain, Portugal, Greece), although it is Lord Palmerston's hobby; but, on the other hand, I maintain that England's true position is to be the defence and support of states whose independent development is sought to be impeded from without."

The terrible condition of Ireland was the main topic of the Queen's speech on opening parliament on the 19th of January, 1847, and the low and sympathetic tones in which her Majesty referred to the distress of the Irish people showed that she was deeply affected. The horrible accounts of suffering from famine and fever had been increasing in intensity, and were only too fully endorsed by the facts laid before parliament. Before such general desolation of a people enfeebled by want and without resources, the government might have shrunk in dismay; and the public sympathy was wrought to a sense of anguish by narratives which, as Lord Brougham said, were not to be

exceeded by those scenes depicted in the pages of Josephus, or on the canvas of Poussin, or in the dismal chant of Dante. "A famine of the thirteenth had fallen upon a people of the nineteenth century," said Lord John Russell; and though both the government and organizations of benevolent persons made strenuous efforts to provide for the mitigation of the dreadful calamity, those efforts seemed for some months to be unavailing against the misery under which people, of whole villages and districts, died in the streets and the open fields, or crept to the nearest shelter of a hedge or a wall and perished of hunger and disease, till the corpses outnumbered the living, who were too feeble to give them burial, even by covering them with earth close to the places where they lay, or by conveying them uncoffined to the grave-yards.

A voluntary subscription for the relief of the famishing people had already commenced, the Queen heading the list with £2000, and the amount rapidly grew to a very large sum. Two millions of money had been advanced from the treasury to meet the distress, and half a million of men, who with women and children represented two millions, were living by employment provided by the Board of Public Works. At first these works included road-making and other labour which was not really required, and an almost insuperable difficulty arose because the wages tempted small farmers and agricultural labourers to desert the neglected unremunerative land, which was thus left untilled and altogether unproductive. The situation appeared to be desperate, and bills were passed in parliament for establishing immediate as well as permanent relief committees, with powers to receive subscriptions, levy rates, open soup-kitchens, and to use donations from the government in purchasing supplies of food, and distributing rations, and for promoting the employment of labourers to till

the land for their own support. When the prevailing destitution had been alleviated advances of money were to be made for the reclamation of waste lands, improving estates, and extending the provisions of the poor-law. The act which gave facilities for selling encumbered estates and bringing them into more profitable cultivation was not passed till the following year, when it had a considerable effect in putting an end to one of the remaining causes of depression, and restoring several districts to a better condition. Cargoes of wheat, meal, and Indian corn were rapidly despatched, and generous contributions of food were sent from the United States and from Turkey. Early in 1847 a million sterling a month was being expended, and out of 2049 electoral districts 1677 had been placed under the Relief Act, about three million rations of food had been given, and a hundred thousand sold daily, and in six months £54,439 had been received in money subscriptions. The suffering, however, had been appalling. In the union of Skibbereen, for instance, 11,000 persons (nearly the whole population) had perished; the deaths in the workhouse were 140 in one month. The general mortality of the country in 1847 was above three times greater than the average of the previous three years. Not only the corn but the potato crops had been utterly blighted, and on the potato the Irish peasantry had persistently relied for food. The corn crops had formerly yielded about two million quarters, and had mostly gone to England in times of high prices, or *war* prices. The potato was the staple for native support. Now there was neither, and the blight and consequent famine extended to the Highlands and western islands of Scotland, where, as in Ireland, the supply from hand to mouth having failed, the poverty-stricken people had no resources until food was sent to them. Great efforts were made when once the fearful need was

realized, and there was no half-heartedness in incurring future taxation or making subscriptions, though at that very time heavy commercial failures and panics were adding to the anxieties of the government and the people of London and the large towns. The calamities that followed reckless speculation and wild investments in railways were already being felt, and threatened alarming results. All this time, too, the efforts of the government and the people who were earnestly endeavouring to alleviate misery in Ireland were being retarded by those who endeavoured to incite the peasantry to crime and rebellion, and who prevented rather than aided the prompt distribution of food and the provision of labour by which the starving population could be made partially self-supporting. It was for this reason that a repressive act was passed, little less stringent than that previously prepared by Sir Robert Peel.

On the 15th of May, 1847, O'Connell, feeble, broken, and incurable, had died at Genoa on his way to Rome. He was seventy-two years old, and the men who succeeded him were those who had long spoken of him with contempt because he would not lead the Irish people into hopeless rebellion. It was not till the end of 1848 that the measures taken for relieving the distress had produced the hoped-for results, and that the condition of Ireland had been so much improved as to show comparative prosperity, but by that time the more violent of the leaders had discovered that they had not increased their influence and were unable to raise any large assemblies in the districts where they endeavoured to carry out their programme of inveterate animosity. The more important of them had been arrested, and, after trial, sentenced to various terms of transportation or imprisonment, nor did the large majority of the Irish people appear to lament their departure at a time when the

country needed a general peaceable effort for its recovery from the calamities of the former two years.

Her Majesty had decided to take another autumn journey in Scotland, but an excursion was first made down the Channel to Dartmouth, the Scilly Islands, which were visited, and Milford-haven, where the royal yacht anchored. While the two princes went in the *Fairy* to visit Pembroke the Queen remained on deck sketching, and pleasantly returned the greetings of the Welsh women who, wearing men's high-crowned hats, came out with the people that filled the boats, and cheered the Prince of Wales. In the *Fairy* the Queen and the Prince, with their children and suite, passed through the Menai Straits and under the wonderful bridge, and rejoined the squadron and the royal yacht at Holyhead the same evening. On the 16th of August they reached Rothesay Bay, whence an excursion was made to Greenock and up the Clyde to Dumbarton Castle. The tremendous loyalty of the people from Glasgow was embarrassing, for thirty-nine steamers were afloat loaded almost to the water's edge with sight-seers waiting to welcome her Majesty, and a vast flotilla of boats and sailing vessels were moving in all directions, but without getting out of the way.

The *Fairy* then took the royal party up Lochlong, and after returning went to Rothesay, where there were hearty cheers for "the Duke of Rothesay," one of the titles of the Prince of Wales. The voyage next day was past Arran by Lochfyne to Inverary, where a visit was paid to the Duke and Duchess of Argyle ("dear Lady Elizabeth Leveson Gower"), the royal carriage being preceded by pipers and guarded by Highlanders up to the house, outside which stood the Marquis of Lorne, "just two years old, a dear white, fat, fair little fellow, with reddish hair, but very delicate features, like both his father and mother . . .

a merry independent little child. He had a black velvet dress and jacket with a 'sporran,' scarf, and Highland bonnet." The royal yacht passed round the Mull of Cantire to Crinan Bay, where the royal party again embarked, after having steamed down Lochfyne in the *Fairy* to Lochgilp. From Lochgilphead they made the journey along the Crinan Canal in a superbly-decorated barge drawn by three horses with postilions in scarlet. At Loch Crinan they went on board the royal yacht, which next day took them to Oban and thence to Staffa, where the royal party entered the barge to visit the famous cave. "It was the first time that the British standard with a Queen of Great Britain and her husband and children had ever entered Fingal's Cave, and the men gave three cheers, which sounded very impressive there." Iona was also visited, and on the 20th the voyage ended at Fort William, whence the princes went to visit Glencoe. The royal party then travelled by land to Ardverikie, to which they were escorted by Lord Abercorn. The house was a comfortable shooting-lodge, built of stone, on "the remote and desolate but wildly beautiful Loch Laggan," then under a Scotch mist. Her Majesty remained here till the 17th of September, living in quiet fashion and visiting the points of interest amidst romantic and beautiful scenery. The return voyage from Fort-William to the Isle of Man (Ramsay Bay) was made in very inclement weather, and on reaching Fleetwood harbour on the 21st a train was in readiness, and the royal party landed and travelled by railway to London.

Parliament met after the elections, and her Majesty's speech was for the first time transmitted to the chief towns of the kingdom by electric telegraph. It may here be mentioned that in February of the following year an express train made a then astonishing journey from London to Glasgow in 10½ hours. In recording the result of the important application of elec-

tricity to the transmission of messages, it may not be out of place to refer to another discovery which from that date has been of incalculable benefit to humanity, and the practical value of which the Queen soon recognized. Professor Simpson, of Edinburgh, had introduced the application of a new anæsthetic called chloroform, as a substitute for sulphuric ether in surgery and midwifery. The use of sulphuric ether as an anæsthetic appears first to have been brought here from Boston, in the United States, where it had been employed by Dr. Jackson and Dr. Martin in November, 1846, so that about the same period the endeavour to discover the means of alleviating or even of abolishing the pain attendant on what may be called crises of physical suffering was attended with success by two discoveries, both of which have remained in use.

In France the luxury and extravagance of the court, the vices of society, and the selfish grasping policy of the king, who in the matter of the Spanish marriages had too plainly shown that family aggrandizement was his ruling passion, had given emphasis to the demands of reformers, who had probably studied with advantage the effect of earnest moral combination as exemplified in the triumph of the Anti Corn-law League. But there was a vast substratum of the people who were ready for any violence which would avenge their supposed wrongs if it did not remedy the want and misery from which they suffered. When reform meetings were prohibited the organization which had called them together was too powerful to be resisted, and could command the situation; but they were were also attended with elements of insurrectionary violence. The sudden roar of impending revolution came like a thunderclap, and the king was rudely awakened by the intimation that it had already begun to reverberate outside his palace, that he must instantly either call upon the troops to

suppress what might grow into a general insurrection, or that he must as promptly abdicate the throne. He chose the latter course rather than be responsible for a serious and sanguinary conflict. He was no coward, and did not lose his self-possession. Schemer and diplomatizer as he was, there was a foundation of honour and nobility deep down in his character, and he acted with consistency and moral courage, declaring that he had always been a pacific sovereign; that he been chosen by the people, and that he would resign his power rather than shed their blood. His conduct amazed those who believed that if he had firmly repelled the demands of the insurgents, or answered them with bullet and bayonet, he might have saved the throne, which it was his duty to preserve. With some calmness, and not without dignity, he wrote and signed an abdication, leaving the throne to his grandson and heir, the Comte de Paris, eldest boy of the widowed Hélène, Duchess of Orleans. She and all his family, then in Paris, would have dissuaded him, and the duchess with no little courage took the children with her to the Assembly, where some friends protected her; but it was too late, and she with the rest of the royal household of France was compelled to make a hurried escape across the frontier in carriages, which appeared to have been provided for the purpose. No violence was offered them; but there were unmistakable signs that they must depart, and the thoughts of the king and queen, as well as their children, naturally turned to England, where other refugees from the tyranny of rulers, or from the fury and threatened vengeance of the overruled, had already found an asylum.

On the 16th of February (1848) Prince Albert had written to Stockmar: "I may not conceal from you that Paris at this moment is causing us *extreme* anxiety. Louise Philippe and

Guizot show great political boldness, but they have taken their stand entirely upon the old Bourbon *terrain*. The beginning of the change, and it may be the determining momentum, I still hold to have been the Spanish marriage."

On the evening of the 24th of February, while the House of Commons was sitting, a murmur of conversation was heard at the door, and spread through the assembly. Intelligence had arrived of the flight of Louis Philippe, and of the proclamation of a republic in France. Mr. Cobden was sitting beside Mr. Hume when the tidings reached their bench. Sir Robert Peel was on the opposite front seat alone, his powerful party having been broken and scattered by his great measure of corn-law repeal. Mr. Hume went to tell the news to Sir Robert, who, when he had listened to the startling intelligence, said: "This comes of trying to carry on a government by means of a mere majority of a chamber without regard to the opinion out of doors. It is what these people (pointing with his thumb over his shoulder to the Protectionists behind him) wanted me to do, but I refused."

It may be mentioned here that Lord George Bentinck, who had been antagonistic to the proposal for the admission of Jews to parliament, had retired from the leadership of his party. In the following September he died suddenly, and Mr. Disraeli became the acknowledged, as he had long been the virtual leader.

The insurrection in Paris had not been "bloodless." There was a fearful conflict between the troops and the mob, on whom they fired, the accidental discharge of a gun having led to the attack. The National Guard—that body of civic soldiers which had been formed by the "citizen" king—joined the popular demonstration and disarmed the Municipal Guard, to prevent them from dispersing the people. Barricades were erected,

where there was desperate fighting, and numbers of their defenders were slain, the dead bodies being carried through the city on wagons by the insurgents for the purpose of rousing the people.

In the midst of the anxieties caused by these events the Queen and Prince Albert received the sad intelligence of the unexpected death of the Dowager-duchess of Gotha, from whom they had parted while on their visit to Germany. "It is impossible to have known her," said the Princess of Hohenlohe in a letter to the Queen, "and not to have loved and venerated her; but I also know what she was to dearest Albert, and how he will lament her loss." He did feel it keenly, and the general condition of affairs distressed him. On the 29th of February his letter to the Dowager-duchess of Coburg showed a more disturbed mind than was usual with him: "What dismal times are these! I cannot give full way to my own grief, harassed as we both are with the terrible present. You also will be in deep distress. Augustus, Clémentine, Nemours, and the Duchess of Montpensier, have come to us one by one like people shipwrecked; Victoire, Alexander, the king, the queen, are still tossing upon the waves, or have drifted to other shores: we know nothing of them. France is in flames; Belgium is menaced. We have a ministerial, money, and tax crisis; and Victoria is on the point of being confined. My heart is heavy."

The situation was, however, less serious than he feared, Louis Philippe and Amélie had reached Trouville, where, on the 2d of March, they took a passage on the express steamer at Havre under the name of Mr. and Mrs. Smith, which not one Frenchman in a thousand could have pronounced. On the following morning they landed at Newhaven. Claremont was placed at the disposal of the royal fugitives, and there they were

afterwards visited by the Queen, who maintained the kindly friendship which she had always felt for the Orleans family, though she had certainly been grossly deceived by the king and his minister Guizot, who also escaped to England, though there is reason to believe that England would have been betrayed by the government of Louis Philippe had not the revolution blown all their schemes into the air. It was afterwards known that Russia, Prussia, and Austria, alarmed by the encouragement given by England to constitutional movements for obtaining civil and religious liberty, sought to isolate her from European affairs. In Count d'Haussonville's *Histoire de la Politique*, published in 1850, the suspicion that this had been the case was confirmed. "The great powers of Europe intimated to France their desire to enter into a combination with her to the exclusion of England. Our cabinet had accepted their overtures; a day was appointed (the 15th of March) to give a definite and conclusive form to arrangements which had already been discussed."

Lamartine, who had been elected minister of foreign affairs in the government of the new French republic, notified to foreign ambassadors in Paris that the new leaders had neither changed the place of France in Europe nor her loyal and sincere disposition to maintain relations of true harmony with powers who like herself desired the independence of nations and the peace of the world. The foreign ambassadors remained at their posts till they received instructions from their governments. Lord John Russell immediately announced that England would not interfere in any way with the internal affairs of France, and Lord Palmerston directly afterwards stated in the House of Commons that Great Britain had officially recognized the French provisional government.

Lamartine understood England, and the constitutional support which it had given to the efforts being made by political reformers in other nations, and the republican ministry was desirous to form a friendly alliance. Some members of the "Irish Confederation," with Mr. Smith O'Brien at their head, soon afterwards went as a deputation to Paris, supposing that the provisional government might be induced to support their demands; but Lamartine knew well, as the leaders of the "Irish Confederation" also knew, that such doings as theirs would not be tolerated by any government in Europe, and certainly not by that of America. He therefore warned them not to expect the republic to interfere in Irish grievances, as it wished to be on good terms not with this or that part of Great Britain, but with Great Britain entire.

On the 18th of March the announcement was made that the Queen had given birth to a daughter, and that mother and child were perfectly well. The Prince had soon recovered his usual firm and cheerful bearing, but he had feared that the Queen might suffer from the shocks of recent events. Her Majesty had, however, given no reason for these anxieties. Her courage and cheerfulness were as conspicuous as his own, though she was acquainted with all the serious occurrences of the time, and her only thoughts and conversation seemed to be of politics; "but I never was calmer, quieter, or less nervous," she wrote to her uncle. "Great events make me calm; it is only trifles that irritate my nerves."

The ceremony of the christening of the infant princess took place in the private chapel which had been built at Buckingham Palace, where she received the names of Louise Caroline Alberta, the first name being that of the mother of Prince Albert and of the Queen of the Belgians. A chorale composed

by the Prince some years before was adapted to the hymn "In Life's Gay Morn," to be sung on the occasion; and as the ceremony took place in the month of the birthdays of the Queen and of the little Princess Helena, there was a state banquet and some quiet court festivities, which, though nothing of the kind could be regarded by such kindly hosts as merely conventional, were probably less gay than usual, since the burden of public affairs, and foreign as well as domestic troubles, pressed somewhat heavily.

Metternich had prophesied that England would have the last and the worst revolution, because of the wealth of the country, the freedom allowed to all classes, and the recklessness of the poor; but Metternich could only see with his own eyes, and he had not learned to contemplate the English character and constitution. There was much distress here, much suffering, poverty, and destitution. There had been a serious commercial panic, gigantic business failures, much depression of trade, and notorious instances of oppression on the part of employers of labour in certain branches of industry. Men of high culture and profound religious feeling, including some of the clergy who agreed with Charles Kingsley, espoused the cause of the people and gave vivid expression to their sentiments, and a powerful, plaintive voice to their sufferings; but the overhanging cloud was electric with the sheet-lightning that purifies and illuminates, and not with the bolt that carries ruin and devastation. There was, as might have been expected, an endeavour to revive "Chartism" as a power, but it had fallen into the hands of poor and ill-informed men, who were advocates of physical force; and though there was enough of organization to devise futile plans for riotous meetings and acts of destruction, the demonstrations received no considerable or sustained

support. The government being acquainted with all that went on at the secret meetings at places where, in two or three instances, arms had been concealed, several arrests were made. It was known too that a plan had been devised for a simultaneous rising in some of the large towns and in London, and there were dark threats of preparation for setting fire to public buildings; but these intentions were promptly frustrated. A good deal of fiery writing and speaking by eminent persons passed unnoticed, while, unhappily, a few poor and ignorant orators, who spoke sedition on Clerkenwell Green or Trafalgar Square, were sent to jail for various terms.

As a result of "the state of Europe" and the "condition of Ireland," to relieve which distressful country we had, in the midst of our own needs, contributed a few millions sterling, there was perhaps a little too much police interference occasionally; and a Crown and Government Security Bill was passed, contrary to the opinions of a good many constitutional politicians; but the "National Convention," as the Chartist leaders called their movement, was sufficiently troublesome and threatening to warrant precautions against serious attempts. Therefore when a great demonstration was announced to be held on Kennington Common on the 10th of April, the authorities were prepared; the Duke of Wellington had troops ready to protect the principal public buildings, but not a soldier was to be seen, and a large body of police was stationed not far from the part of the common where the meeting was held. They had little or nothing to do; for though some of the Chartist speakers used rather truculent language, and professed to long for a conflict, the proceedings were on the whole quiet and unexciting. There were only about 25,000 persons present, and probably half of that number had gone out of curiosity. The real demonstration

was not that of the Chartists, but of the quarter of a million of the inhabitants of the metropolis belonging to all classes, who presented themselves to be sworn in as special constables for the protection of London while the police were on duty at Kennington.

The two leaders of the Chartists, Mr. Feargus O'Connor and Mr. Bronterre O'Brien, had quarrelled on the question whether those attending the meeting should go armed; and, happily, Mr. O'Connor, who was one of the members in parliament for Nottingham, and was certainly touched with insanity, was rational enough to insist that the original intention of making only a demonstration of moral force should not be altered. After various speakers had addressed the meeting, and in some cases vilified and denounced each other, Sir Richard Mayne, who was chief of the police, appeared on horseback, and riding towards a highly-decorated car occupied by the leading orators, sent for Mr. Feargus O'Connor to confer with him. The Chartist leader had the good sense to accede to the invitation, and the result was that the meeting dissolved peaceably, and a monster petition in favour of the "Charter," which occupied a second car, was conveyed in a cab to the House of Commons, there to be presented in due form.

At Glasgow there had been a riot of so serious a character that it nearly approached to an insurrection, and was believed to be a signal for a general rising in the towns of the west of Scotland; but the citizens had combined to suppress it, and were assisted by the armed pensioners and a body of cavalry, which arrived under the direction of Mr. (afterwards Sir) Archibald Alison, the historian, who was sheriff of Lanarkshire. In Edinburgh and in several of the manufacturing towns in the north of England there were riots, which were

only suppressed by the determination of the general community that law and order should go hand in hand with liberty in the national progress. Amidst all this alarm and excitement the Queen did not doubt—she had no reason to doubt—the loyalty of the country; but both she and Albert were deeply concerned at the poverty and distress under which numbers of the labouring population were suffering. The practical improvement of the condition of the labouring classes had long been a matter of sincere interest to the Prince, and for four years he had held the position of president of the society formed with that object, under the active promotion of Lord Ashley (afterwards the Earl of Shaftesbury) and others. On the 18th of May he attended a meeting of the society with the express desire of urging its claims, and expressing in vigorous language his belief in the duty of rendering practical assistance and counsel in promoting well-directed exertion for mutual assistance without dictatorial interference with labour or ostentatious display of charity or munificence.

Parliament had been sitting for ten months when it was prorogued by the Queen on the 5th of September. The occasion was an important one, for the brilliant ceremony was held in the new House of Lords, which had only just been completed. A vast crowd awaited her Majesty as she passed, and the demonstrations of loyal affection seemed to be intended to show that amidst all the dangers and threats of rebellion she reigned in the hearts of her people. With the emphasis which she knew so well how to employ, the Queen acknowledged the faithfulness of the country to herself and to the constitution.

There was time for a brief holiday, and her Majesty, with the Prince, the two elder children, and the little Prince Alfred, who had been ailing, made a voyage to Aberdeen, whence they

went to visit Balmoral, which had been strongly recommended by Sir James Clark as a locality possessing charming scenery, and that dry and bracing air which was found to be more beneficial in restoring the health of her Majesty and the Prince than the more humid atmosphere of the Western Isles.

Nothing could have been more suitable than this place because of the sandy or gravelly soil of the Lowlands, as well as of the hills, while the whole of Deeside, from Charleston of Aboyne to Castleton of Braemar, was one of the driest districts of Scotland, Balmoral being the most favourable spot in the valley. The lease of the Balmoral estate had fallen into the hands of the Earl of Aberdeen on the death of his brother, Sir Robert Gordon, in 1847; but so delighted were the Queen and the Prince with the place that they acquired first the lease and afterwards (from the Earl of Fife) the fee simple of the estate. The little castle built by Sir Robert Gordon was of granite, whitewashed, and with several small turrets, and was situated upon a rising ground surrounded by birch wood near the river Dee, which flowed at the back of the castle. "Looking down from the hill which overhangs the house," writes her Majesty, "the view is charming. To the left you look at the beautiful hills surrounding Lochnagar, and to the right towards Ballater to the glen (or valley) along which the Dee winds with beautiful wooded hills. . . . It was so calm and so solitary, it did one good as one gazed around, and the pure mountain air was most refreshing. All seemed to breathe freedom and peace, and to make one forget the world and its sad turmoils."

There was not much opportunity of forgetting, however, even for the fortnight that the visit lasted, for, as we have seen, the world seemed to be turned upside down, and the news and despatches from all quarters still occupied her Majesty's earnest

attention. It had been a troublous year, and the Prince said, "One is heartily glad to say good-bye to it." One of the latest sorrows that belonged to it was the death of Lord Melbourne on the 24th of November.

On the 19th of May, 1849, the Queen was fired at as she was returning down Constitution Hill to Buckingham Palace in an open carriage with three of her children. Her Majesty did not lose her presence of mind; but, motioning for the carriage not to stop, talked to the children to engage their attention. The Prince, who was riding in advance, was unaware of what had happened, but the culprit was seized by the crowd, from whom he had to be rescued by the police, or he would have been beaten to death. He was an Irish labourer named William Hamilton, and it is to be supposed that he only intended an alarming demonstration, as the pistol had evidently been charged only with powder. He was tried, pleaded guilty, and was sentenced, under the act of 1842, to seven years' transportation. The Queen never regarded these attempts as any indication of danger in going freely among her people, and it was the earnest wish both of her Majesty and Prince Albert to pay a visit to Ireland, an intention which had been deferred on a previous occasion. Though timid counsels might have been opposed to the journey, the Queen had no distrust of the loyalty and affection of the Irish people, and the condition of the country was speedily improving. There was a cheery promise, too, of the return of plentiful harvests and comparative prosperity, and the time was propitious for her Majesty to visit her Irish subjects. It was determined that the journey should be made early in August; but both the Queen and Prince Albert were strongly of opinion that though a state visit had formerly been expected the general distress in the country would make it undesirable to

draw on the imperial resources for this purpose, particularly as it would also throw upon Ireland an expense which could not be reasonably incurred, and would under such conditions be in the nature of ill-timed prodigality. It was therefore made known that the royal party, which would include the four elder children, would pay a less ceremonious visit, and that the voyage would be made as a yachting excursion for visiting Cork, Waterford, Dublin, Wexford, and Belfast, and thence to Glasgow on the way to Balmoral.

On the evening of the 2d of August the royal yacht and its attendant squadron anchored in the Cove of Cork. The signs of hearty and delighted welcome blazed in bonfires on the surrounding heights. On the following morning, as the Queen landed at Cove, the clouds which had been hanging gray and heavy were broken by a brilliant burst of sunshine, and the new name of Queenstown was conferred on the place amidst bright and cheerful associations. The journey in the *Fairy* up the river Lee to Cork was accompanied by wild shouts of welcome from the people assembled upon the banks, the firing of guns, the ringing of bells, and every expression of a loyalty which had already filled the streets and every window and balcony of the town with a delighted crowd, all cheering at their loudest.

The multitude that surrounded the royal carriage were "noisy, excitable, but very good-humoured, running and pushing about, and laughing, talking, and shrieking;" and the Queen further observed, "The beauty of the women is very remarkable and struck us much; such beautiful dark eyes and hair, and such fine teeth." At Waterford the reception was just as enthusiastic, and when on the evening of the 5th the royal squadron entered the harbour of Kingstown, the scene was very imposing. Yachts,

boats, steamers, laden to the water's edge with eager crowds, had awaited the arrival of the royal party before they reached the harbour, and "the wharfs where the landing-place was prepared were densely crowded; altogether it was a noble and stirring spectacle."

At ten next morning the Queen and the Prince landed, the men-of-war in harbour saluting, ladies as well as men cheering with all their might, men wedged in a dense mass, yet finding room to wave anything that could be waved, hat, stick, wand, or coat (for it was a hot day), and shouting greetings with undiminished energy till her Majesty had reached the railway, by which the royal party quickly reached Dublin. The sight of the Queen's children touched the warm Irish hearts, and a stout old lady gave voice to the general emotion when she screamed: "Oh! Queen dear, make one of them Prince Patrick, and all Ireland will die for you." The route to the viceregal lodge in Phœnix Park was one scene of exuberant and unbroken loyalty, the very roofs and house-fronts were alive with people; even the suburban hedge-rows were gay with flags, the poorest cottages were hung with humble wreaths and evergreens; it was, as the Queen said, a never-to-be-forgotten scene.

The enthusiasm remained unabated during the stay of her Majesty in Dublin, and the observances were of a mingled stately and unconventional character. Institutions were visited, and the National Model Schools, where her Majesty was received by the venerable Dr. Murray, the Roman Catholic archbishop, and by the Archbishop of Dublin, greatly interested both the Queen and the Prince as a successful endeavour to promote education irrespective of the doctrinal differences of creed. There was a levée where four thousand persons were presented, and a review in the Phœnix Park, after which the Prince

visited the Royal Irish Academy, the Royal College of Surgeons, and the Royal Dublin Society, of which he was a vice-patron. After a speech acknowledging in cordial terms the manifestations of loyalty which had greeted the Queen and himself, he examined the show of cattle and agricultural implements, on which he made some practical remarks respecting the rearing of cattle and the improvement of breeding stock as the best prospects for agricultural prosperity in Ireland.

A drawing-room was held at the castle in the evening, and next day there was a visit to the Duke of Leinster at Carlow. When the royal visitors re-embarked at Kingstown the scene of the landing was repeated, or even exceeded, and as the packet passed the extreme point of the pier inclosing the harbour, the vast crowd gathered there sent up such a cheer that the Queen climbed the paddle-box on which Prince Albert was standing and waved her handkerchief, at the same time giving orders to slacken speed. The paddles scarcely moved, and by its own impetus the vessel glided slowly on close to the pier and far beyond it; every eye of that vast shouting multitude fixed on the figure of the Sovereign, who still stood waving thanks and farewells. The royal standard was three times lowered in salute to a loyal people.

It may well be believed that the people of Belfast were no less warmly demonstrative than those of the south, and though only a few hours could be devoted to the visit there was time enough to show how heartily that brief visit was appreciated. The royal party then continued their voyage to Glasgow, where the whole of the inhabitants were ready to give them a brilliant reception as they passed in a kind of triumphal procession through the principal streets, where from five to six hundred thousand people awaited them.

The year closed sadly. At Osborne on the 9th of October Prince Albert received the news of the sudden death of Mr. Anson, his private secretary, who had been so deservedly respected by the Queen and the Prince that their mourning for him induced them to remain for some days in partial retirement. On the 30th the Queen was to have opened the new Coal Exchange, but was prevented from doing so by an attack of chicken-pox. Her disappointment was much increased by the fact that this was the first state occasion on which the Prince of Wales and the Princess Royal were to be brought into notice; but Prince Albert officiated for her Majesty, and with the two children and the suite embarked at Westminster in the royal barge, rowed by twenty-seven boatmen, and afterwards preceded by the lord-mayor's barge, and accompanied by a superbly decorated flotilla conveying attendants in rich liveries, and a distinguished company in court attire. The streets were thronged, bells rang, guns fired, bands played. The assembly at the building was a brilliant one, and the little prince was made of no small importance; everything was successful, and the ceremony was performed with great *éclat*, but through it all Prince Albert was depressed with the thought that the good Dowager Queen Adelaide lay at "the Priory" at Stanmore sick unto death. She lingered for some time, but in the last week of November the Prince accompanied the Queen to make what was to be their last visit to her. On the 2d of December she died. "A *great* loss to us both," wrote her Majesty to King Leopold, "and an irreparable one to hundreds and hundreds. She is universally regretted, and the feeling shown is very gratifying. Her last moments were, thank God, very peaceful. . . . Poor mama is very much cut up by this sad event, and to her the queen is a great and serious loss. The dear queen has left the most

affecting directions (written eight years ago) for her funeral, which she wishes to be as private as possible. She wishes her coffin to be carried by sailors, a most touching tribute to her husband's memory, and to the navy to which she was so much attached!"

The Queen, in addition to other troubles, was suffering some anxiety on account of her husband, on whose health the increasing burden of work which he had cheerfully undertaken was evidently having an injurious effect. From a little after daylight, and in the winter long before daylight, he was busy in preparing the official business of the day, and when the number of his engagements, his responsibilities as head of the royal household, and his active practical interest in the promotion of education and works of benevolence are all considered, it is surprising that he could find time for those lighter graces and recreations of life which he enjoyed when he found that he could do so without neglecting anything that he considered to be his duty. When it is mentioned that Lord John Russell, writing to him in June, 1849, said that during the previous year 28,000 despatches were received or sent by the foreign office, it may be concluded, as these had to be seen and considered by the Queen, that the work in relation to them must have been very serious; and it may be supposed that many of them were of sufficient importance to require memoranda or letters to be written or consultations to be held on the subjects to which they referred.

The change to the pure air and healthy exercise at Balmoral; the rest, retirement, and congenial occupations at Osborne, were of incalculable benefit to the Prince, but they were necessarily brief, for, in addition to all his other work, he had undertaken the direction of an enterprise which required his constant presence in or near London, and his almost unremitting attention.

The story of the Great International Exhibition of 1851 and its palace of glass has been so often told that there is no need to repeat it in detail. An exhibition of art, industry, and scientific inventions was not a new thing in the world. The old German fairs at Frankfort and elsewhere had been celebrated for three centuries, and in Paris there had been periodical "expositions" from the time of the first consulate. The latest of these had been held quite recently, where examples of the manufactures and art industries of France were displayed, and attracted many visitors from other countries. But to Prince Albert belonged the chief credit of originating and developing the idea of an international exhibition that should include the latest and most significant productions of every country in the civilized world, in raw material, manufactures, mechanical and scientific inventions and appliances, the arts, and above all, in art manufactures.

The Prince had carefully thought out a scheme before he submitted his proposal to the government, and finding that it was favourably received he communicated with some leading members of the Society of Arts at a meeting at Buckingham Palace. So completely had he considered the aim and probable results of the exhibition, the site which would be most appropriate for it in Hyde Park, and the objects to be displayed, that no material alteration of his plans was suggested.

The first steps to be taken were to discover how the project would be received by the manufacturers and inventors of the kingdom, and whether the international character of the exhibition would be practically recognized by continental states. With regard to the former it was soon apparent that the scheme was warmly appreciated, and that no feeling of jealousy or seclusion would prevent the discoverers of scientific processes or the inventors of industrial machinery from sending the best and newest productions.

On the Continent, France, which had gone through a rapid series of struggles, had taken the first opportunity of restoring a settled government. With certain modifications history was there repeating itself. After the revolution which had dethroned Louis Philippe, there were violent insurrections against the rule of the provisional government, with the result that there was a general desire to settle the republic on secure grounds. When the elections came on in December, 1848, Charles Louis Napoleon Bonaparte was chosen as president by an enormous majority of votes. He had long been known by a good many people in London, where he had lived as a refugee for some years, and his dreamy and taciturn manner, his fixed conviction that in him the Napoleonic prestige would be restored, his theatrical and futile attempts to make a demonstration at Strasbourg and Boulogne, and his very easy escape from imprisonment at Ham after the second offence, had caused him to be regarded with speculative curiosity by those who were acquainted with him. He had been in Paris soon after the proclamation of the provisional government, but returned to England, seeing that he was suspected of being in France for the purpose of creating disorder. He had, as everybody has been told, attended to be sworn in as a special constable on the occasion of the Chartist meeting, and that was the last that was heard of him until by five million and a half of votes by the departments he was placed at the head of the French government.

The Queen and Prince Albert had heard the news at Balmoral on the 24th of September, and saw its significance. A year after we find Lord Normanby, our ambassador in Paris, writing to say that the prince president was delighted with the proposal to hold a great international exhibition in London, and that he would do all in his power to secure its success so far as

France was concerned, a promise which was afterwards well kept. Some other foreign powers also responded with encouraging appreciation of the magnitude of the enterprise, and our colonies (the Australian colonies were then about to receive a regular and complete constitution) as well as the East India Company could be looked to with confidence. The inventors, manufacturers, and artists of the chief countries of Europe were willing to exhibit, and sent examples of their choicest productions. The people of foreign states were already manifesting curiosity, and, as the event proved, were prepared to come in large numbers to see "the world's show," but most of the rulers of the larger states looked askance at the porject, and would neither take any personal part in it by being present, nor otherwise give it much encouragement. They had a notion that among the large numbers of the people who would take this opportunity to visit England, there would be many who would be impressed, not only by the great exhibition, but by our liberal institutions and the freedom enjoyed by the population under a constitutional government. The shilly-shally King of Prussia, who, between the arrogant directions of the Emperor of Russia and the demands of the revolutionary party in Berlin, had had a rough time of it, almost forbade the Prince and Princess of Prussia to come to England for the opening of the Exhibition in May, 1851, lest some German or Polish refugee might be lying in wait with dagger or pistol. But the prince had been here repeatedly before, and knew enough about our ways to feel quite as secure as though he had remained in Berlin.

On the 1st of May (1850) the birth of another son (now the Duke of Connaught) was announced from Buckingham Palace; and the good news that the Queen and the infant prince were both well was communicated by Prince Albert to the Dowager-

duchess of Coburg: "I congratulate you to-day on the birth of a seventh grandchild, and expect in return good wishes from you on the birth of a third son. This morning, about a quarter past eight, after rather a restless night (being Walpurgis night *that* was quite appropriate), while the witches were careering on the Blocksberg (under Ernst Augustus' mild sceptre), a little boy glided into the light of day, and has been received by the sisters with *jubilates.* 'Now we are just as many as the days in the week,' was the cry; and then a bit of a struggle arose as to who should be Sunday. Out of well-bred courtesy the honour was conceded to the new-comer."

The 1st of May! It was the Duke of Wellington's eighty-first birthday; and what greater token of regard could the royal parents give to the old guardian of the honour of Britain—the faithful, loyal, and devoted friend—than to name the prince after him. "It is a singular thing," wrote the Queen, "that this so much wished-for boy should be born on the old duke's eighty-first birthday. May that and his beloved father's name bring the poor little infant happiness and good fortune!" On the 22d of June, therefore, the little prince was baptized by the names of Arthur William Patrick Albert; the first for the duke; the second for the Prince of Prussia, who was also present as sponsor; Patrick in remembrance of the visit to Ireland (and perhaps of the hint given by the old lady in the crowd). The name William was also chosen in memory of Queen Adelaide, whose sister, the Duchess Ida of Saxe-Weimar, was godmother.

The 1st of May was to be the date of the opening of the Great Exhibition in the following year, and it may be mentioned here that amidst all the excitement and ceremonial that preceded and accompanied the inauguration of that magnificent spectacle, the Duke of Wellington remembered his little godson. In the

Queen's journal recording the memorable day we read: "We began it with tenderest greetings for the birthday of our dear little Arthur. At breakfast there was nothing but congratulations. Our humble gifts of toys were added to by a beautiful little bronze replica of the Amazon (Kiss's) from the Prince (of Prussia), a beautiful paper-knife from the princess, and a nice little clock from mama." But it was when the great event was over, and the proud and happy Queen, rejoicing in the success of the work of her no less happy consort, had returned through a vast multitude of the citizens of the world to the palace, that her Majesty records: "I must not omit to mention an interesting episode of this day, viz. the visit of the good old duke on this his eighty-second birthday to his little godson, our dear little boy. He came to us both at five, and gave him a golden cup and some toys, which he had himself chosen, and Arthur gave him a nosegay." There is something very touching in the words —"which he had himself chosen." The duke, "the hero of a hundred fights," had been one of the great attractions of the day to thousands of eyes who watched him as he walked in the royal procession along the nave of the vast palace of glass arm in arm with that other old and grizzled warrior, Lord Anglesey. "And Arthur gave him a nosegay." We can almost fancy that as the gray head bent in recognition of the simple gift from that infant hand, an unaccustomed dimness came into those clear steel-blue eyes that had looked undaunted across so many a battle-field.

It is only repeating a declaration, made by everybody concerned in the promotion of the magnificent Exhibition of 1851, that if any man was competent to preside over such an undertaking that man was Prince Albert. His varied accomplishments in art, his technical knowledge, his practical and yet original and imaginative faculty, his painstaking attention to details, his delib-



eration and patient consideration of the opinions and advice of others before arriving at a conclusion; his steadfast adhesion to the conclusion which he believed to be the right one, were all qualifications which eminently fitted him for the task, in the successful fulfilment of which he afterwards took such keen delight. The work was enormous; for though the general opinion of probable exhibitors and of the public had to be sounded, and at a later stage public meetings and other assemblies were held to promote the object in view, he determined that the scheme should succeed on its own merits. He was not without the support of "men of light and leading," and among the first were Lord Granville and the late Sir Stafford Northcote. The former wrote: "In any case I am afraid that there must be a great tax on the attention and time of his Royal Highness, who appears to be the only person who has considered the subject both as a whole and in its details. The whole thing would fall to pieces if he left it to itself."

The composition of the commission, the executive committee, and the building committee, included a considerable number of men of recognized eminence and ability, who had to explain to the public the nature of the undertaking, and to obtain the necessary funds for its installation. It was not an easy duty at first; but the ability of the advocates was no less conspicuous than the importance of the cause, which soon began to impress and to attract thoughtful and practical men. The ambassador of the French Republic, M. Drouyn de Lhuys; the Chevalier Bunsen, who delightedly represented Prussia; the Belgian ambassador M. Van de Weyer; and Mr. Lawrence the American representative, were all present at the first of the great public meetings in Willis's Rooms, where Lord Morpeth presided and Lord Brougham and the Bishop of Oxford lent their eloquence to

arouse the general interest. The chairman was singularly happy in quoting, in reference to the forthcoming Exhibition, the words of Pope:

"The time shall come, when, free as seas and wind,
Unbounded Thames shall flow for all mankind,
Whole nations enter with each swelling tide,
And seas but join the regions they divide;
Earth's distant ends our glories shall behold,
And the new world launch forth to seek the old."

A month afterwards at a great banquet at the Mansion House, to which a distinguished company was invited, the Prince, in a speech of much power and interest, expressed his view of the objects of the forthcoming exhibition. We were, he said, living at a period of most wonderful transition, which tended rapidly to accomplish that great end to which all history points, the realization of the unity of mankind. Not a unity which breaks down the limits and levels the peculiar characteristics of the different nations of the earth, but rather a unity the result and product of those very national varieties and antagonistic qualities. The Prince reminded his audience that while the distances separating different nations were vanishing before the achievements of modern invention, the languages of all nations were known or could be acquired by everybody; and while thought was communicated with the rapidity and even by the power of lightning, the great principle of division of labour, which might be called the moving power of civilization, was being extended to all branches of science, industry, and art. The Exhibition of 1851 was to give a true test and a living picture of the point of development at which mankind had arrived, and also a new starting-point for a departure, in the discoveries of science, their application by industry, and the laws of beauty and symmetry by which art gave form to our productions.

Interest was universally aroused, but it was still difficult to obtain a sufficient sum of money to ensure success, and the arrangement of details with the immense number of foreign exhibits which were expected would require great attention to the design for the building, the site of which was not yet agreed to. Not only anxieties, but griefs and troubles marked the year of which this international display was the main topic. Lord John Russell's ministry was by no means strong, and the strongest man in it, Lord Palmerston, was the very one who was constantly causing alarm, if not actual danger, because of his wilfulness in acting independently of the prime-minister, the cabinet, or the Sovereign, in sending arbitrary despatches on his own responsibility, or in accompanying the official instructions to our representatives abroad with letters containing declarations and expressions of opinion which were not easy to dissociate from the instructions themselves.

We had already given emphasis to our declarations on the side of liberty by joining with France in protecting Turkey from the threatened attacks of Russia and Austria for refusing to surrender the Hungarian and Polish refugees who had sought a refuge in the dominions of the sultan. English and French vessels of war had also joined in interfering to prevent the bloodthirsty conflict which followed the bombardment of the Sicilians at Messina, and such interventions were permitted by the government and applauded by the nation; but when it came to a foreign minister sending a British fleet to the Dardanelles and risking—almost provoking—hostilities on the part not only of Russia, but of France, by a breach of our joint protectorate of Greece, for the purpose of threatening that country into the admission of preposterous claims of pecuniary compensation for alleged loss or damage of property belonging respectively to a British subject

and a Portuguese Jew, it was time to inquire to what extent the foreign minister was entitled to act without express consultation and concurrence of the Sovereign and the ministry. It was this proceeding which in June, 1850, led to a proposed vote of censure in the Upper House. Lord Palmerston met it by a defence of his general foreign policy, in a speech which lasted five hours, and was distinguished for its brilliant and consummate ability, but even those of his colleagues, who loyally supported him against the adverse motion and averted a ministerial crisis, felt that his conduct had been a striking justification of the grave remonstrances which had more than once been made by the Queen.

Public excitement was at this time again aroused by a cowardly attack on her Majesty by a fellow named Pate, rather an eccentric and conspicuous dandy, who had once been a lieutenant of hussars, and used to pose in Hyde Park. On the 27th of June the Queen was just leaving Cambridge House, Piccadilly, where she had called to ask concerning her uncle, the Duke of Cambridge, who was seriously ill. As her carriage was passing out of the gateway Pate struck at her Majesty's face with his cane. Her forehead was severely bruised, and would have been more seriously injured but for the protection of her bonnet, which was crushed by the force of the blow. Pate was seized by the by-standers, and was afterwards tried and sentenced to seven years' transportation. The plea of insanity was set up, but failed, and no motive was assigned for the outrage.

Almost before her recovery from the shock of this attack the Queen experienced a keen and sudden calamity by the death of Sir Robert Peel, the statesman whom she had known and trusted so well, the faithful friend of herself and the Prince, who found in him an able and potent supporter in the work of the commis-

sion for the forthcoming Exhibition. On the 28th of June, the night of the Palmerston debate, which lasted till five o'clock in the morning, both Sir Robert Peel and Mr. Gladstone had spoken serious and weighty words of remonstrance against the assumptions of the foreign secretary and deprecating undue interference with other nations even with the object of advancing constitutional liberty. On the following day Sir Robert was riding up Constitution Hill on a horse which had been recently purchased for him. He was an unskilful rider, and held a loose rein. The horse shied or stumbled, and threw him, and, as he still retained the reins, fell upon him with its knees between his shoulders. There were serious injuries, the fracture of a rib which pressed upon the lung being that which proved fatal. He died on the 2d of July. The Queen and Prince Albert were overborne with grief, and the latter felt the calamity the more deeply because only a few hours before the fatal accident, Peel had attended the commission, where his advice and influence were needed, because there had been an intimation that parliament would refuse to allow the Exhibition building to be erected on the desired site in Hyde Park. This was a crisis in the scheme the effects of which Sir Robert was to endeavour to avert on the 4th of July, when the question would be considered in the House of Commons, and it was decided that if the refusal should be carried, the proposed Exhibition would have to be abandoned. This apprehension was not realized. When the discussion came on (on the 4th of July), a very large majority was in favour of the site in Hyde Park, and the opposition in the Upper House was withdrawn. Probably the knowledge that the opinion of the man who had so often led and even controlled the house by his earnest eloquence was in favour of the proposed site, had a great effect. Only two evenings before, that assembly had listened in

profound silence and deep grief as Mr. Gladstone, in tones that thrilled and words that admirably expressed the general emotion, spoke of the calamitous loss that had befallen the country. On the 9th of July the body of the statesman who had refused honours and rewards, and had sacrificed place and power to principle, was laid in the grave at Drayton.

On the 8th of July another of the royal dukes, the aged Duke of Cambridge, passed away. These autumn months were marked by sorrows, not the least of which was the serious illness of the Queen of the Belgians, whose condition prevented her from meeting the Queen and Prince Albert, when, with the four eldest children, they paid a brief visit to Ostend, where they were received by King Leopold.

On the 26th of August tidings of the death of Louis Philippe reached the Queen at Osborne. Her Majesty and the Prince went early next morning to Claremont to visit the afflicted family; but did not remain for more than one night in London, as on the following day they had to set out for Edinburgh by railway. The great railway bridges over the Tyne at Newcastle and the Tweed at Berwick having just been completed, her Majesty alighted at both places to perform the ceremonial opening of these vast examples of the progress of engineering science. At Edinburgh her Majesty was received with the unabated enthusiasm which had marked her first visit, and was escorted in state to Holyrood, where the royal party, including the four elder children, remained until the 30th, when the Prince laid the foundation-stone of the National Fine Art Gallery of Edinburgh, before their departure for Balmoral on the following day.

A new grief befell them soon after the return to Osborne. Their fears on behalf of the beloved Louise, Queen of the

Belgians, were too soon realized, and her death on the 11th of October caused irrepressible sorrow, not only to the exiled family at Claremont, but to her Majesty, to whom it was a heart-felt blow. Her affection for her aunt was close, and there was true confidence between them. "Sex, age, culture, feeling, rank," wrote Prince Albert, "in all these they were so much on a par, that a relation of unconstrained friendship naturally grew up between them; and it was a friendship of which Victoria might with justice be proud."

But private griefs, even the most profound, had to be endured amidst unusual demands for attention to momentous affairs of state. There was a ministerial crisis, which ended in the resignation of the Russell cabinet, and a protracted but unsuccessful endeavour on the part of Lord Stanley to form another government. The disunion caused by the division of parties brought about a deadlock, in which the "*Queen's* government" was literally the ruling power; and though her Majesty sent to the Duke of Wellington and to Lord Lansdowne, it was only by a resumption of the helm by Lord John Russell and the passive acceptance by parliament of the renewal of a ministry too weak to inspire confidence, that the ship of state could again be provided with a crew. Fortunately there was a decided and general revival of commerce, trade was brisk, the signs of returning prosperity were unmistakable, and the effects of recent legislation in abolishing restrictions, in conjunction with the vast increase of the means of transit and the realization of the advantages of railway and telegraphic communication had begun to indicate a new era in industrial and commercial enterprise. These were happy conditions for the achievement of the undertaking to which Prince Albert had now to devote unremitting attention, and in which the Queen naturally took a deep per-

sonal interest. The public interest too had now become national, notwithstanding the adverse warnings and declarations of a few opponents, the extreme section of whom was represented by Colonel Sibthorpe, who expressed a wish that fire from heaven would destroy the building and the Exhibition, which would probably be made the opportunity for riot, revolution, and assassination. He warned householders to look after their plate, and fathers of families to be watchful when so many foreign incendiaries and evil characters were to be assembled in the metropolis. Cardinal Manning issued a "pastoral," in which he pointed out the occasion that might be given for the increase of folly, extravagance, dissipation, and worldliness, the danger to faith, morals, and charity by the concentration of corrupted and corrupting elements poured into London and the nation. To the pastoral was appended a bill of fare for Lent. The Bishop of London issued a charge in which he dwelt on the necessity during the great display which would attract people of all nations, for providing opportunities for public worship, and the means of religious observance and instruction. In this he wisely counted on the aid of the British and Foreign Bible Society, and during the time of the Exhibition great numbers of cheap copies of the Holy Scriptures in various languages were distributed. Religious associations were active; many of the churches were open during the week as well as on Sundays for short special services, and in chapels, halls, and other suitable buildings devotional and similar meetings of a simple religious character were held, and were often well attended.

The evils which had been foretold were not fulfilled; the intense public interest in the Exhibition itself, the mutual goodwill which appeared to be a consequence of it, the excellent unobtrusive arrangements for preserving order, and the admir-

able organization for the reception of a vast number of visitors to the building, united to maintain a marvellous fraternization and harmonious temper, in which every representative Briton seemed to feel that he was to keep up the character of a genial host. The resources of the railways were taxed to their utmost to bring the vast multitudes of provincial and foreign visitors; the number of public conveyances in London were enormously increased; and the metropolis may be said to have undergone a transformation by the necessity for providing for the extraordinary demands for eating and drinking. Innumerable "restaurants," inquiry offices, resorts for rest and refreshment, and other apparently temporary establishments, became permanent institutions, and in the desire to afford every accustomed convenience to our foreign visitors, we started great and extensive public improvements. The question not only of the building and its site, but of the means of obtaining the money to pay for it, had been happily settled in time to ensure the completion of the magnificent scheme. A guarantee fund had been started by the council, and the notion was well responded to, while subscriptions also came in pretty liberally.

Of the building itself everybody has heard the story: how Mr. (afterwards Sir) Joseph Paxton, head-gardener to the Duke of Devonshire, and whose name was associated with the splendid domain at Chatsworth, was smitten with a great idea, that a vast, a stupendous expansion of the great glass-house which he had erected for the flowering of the gigantic lily, the Victoria Regia, would be a fitting building for the display of the treasures of art and industry in Hyde Park. We have all heard how, at the latest moment, the design, with details suggested and all computations made to a fraction, was presented and accepted by the council; how, from distant centres of

industry there arrived in breathless haste, but with composed and calculating brains, contractors, founders, engineers, builders; how, as if by magic art, a fairy palace of transparent crystal, sustained on a bright-hued web, that was, in truth, composed of girders and hollow cylinders of iron, which formed the airy columns and arches of that marvellous structure, rose from the green expanse, and took within its splendid shelter the great trees that were left standing where they grew.

There have been exhibitions since—the Crystal Palace itself, rebuilt on Sydenham Hill, still stands, larger even than in its first dimensions—but there has been nothing which in the first view of its glory and the depth of its meaning has impressed the visitor as did this palace of 1851, when it was filled with the superb and wonderful collection that made it the first and the inimitable display of the choicest workmanship, the most wondrous productions of the habitable world. Just as the building seemed to have arisen "as though 'twere by a wizard's rod," so the immediate passage from the outer space into the sheen and colour, the subdued impressive splendour of the show, produced a feeling of deep delight in which there was an element of awe and solemnity. There appeared to be a kind of spontaneity in the gorgeous spectacle, as though it had by nature been so arranged as to admit of little criticism, and had in it an unalterable element of beauty.

But let us hear what the Queen herself says of that wonderful installation on the 1st of May, 1851. There were still many persons who had misgivings as to the security of her Majesty and of the maintenance of order on the occasion of such a vast gathering of all classes and all nations. The Queen, however, had no such misgiving. She could trust to the unfailing love and loyalty of the people. This trust was

entirely justified, and her Majesty was thus able to write after the simple but immeasurably suggestive inauguration had been celebrated: "The great event has taken place—a complete and beautiful triumph—a glorious and touching sight, one which I shall ever be proud of for my beloved Albert and my country. . . . Yes, it is a day which makes my heart swell with pride and glory and thankfulness! The park presented a wonderful spectacle, crowds streaming through it, carriages and troops passing, quite like the coronation day. . . . The day was bright, and all bustle and excitement. . . . At half-past eleven the whole procession in state carriages was in motion. . . . The Green Park and Hyde Park were one densely-crowded mass of human beings, in the highest good-humour and most enthusiastic. . . . The glimpse of the transept through the iron gates, the waving palms, flowers, statues, myriads of people filling the galleries and seats around, with the flourish of trumpets as we entered, gave us a sensation which I can never forget. .. . . We went for a moment to a little side-room where we left our shawls, and where we found mama and Mary (now Princess of Teck), and outside which were standing the other princes. In a few seconds we proceeded, Albert leading me, and having Vicky at his hand, and Bertie holding mine. The sight as we came to the middle, where the steps and chair (which I did not sit on) were placed, with the beautiful crystal fountain just in front of it, was magical, so vast, so glorious, so touching. One felt, as so many did whom I have since spoken to, filled with devotion, more so than by any service I ever heard. The tremendous cheers, the joy expressed in every face, the immensity of the building, the mixture of palms, flowers, trees, statues, fountains, the organ (with 200 instruments and 600 voices, which sounded like nothing), and my beloved

husband the author of this 'Peace Festival,' which united the industry of all nations of the earth, all this was moving indeed, and it was and is a day to live for ever." The procession through the nave, the noble and sublime strains of the Hallelujah Chorus, the simple prayer of consecration, the declaration of the opening of the building followed; and the whole proceedings of that memorable occasion concluded without one single mishap or one case of riot or breach of the laws among the vast and imposing multitude. Well might the Queen conclude her account by saying: "Albert's emphatic words last year, when he said that the feeling would be that of deep thankfulness to the Almighty for the blessings which he has bestowed upon us already here below, this day realized."

The season was one of much pleasurable excitement, and in addition to state balls and receptions there was one magnificent ball and assembly at the Guildhall, where her Majesty and the Prince attended in state amidst a great display of popular enthusiasm. This was to celebrate the success of the International Exhibition, which had just closed, but London was, of course, *en fête* during the whole time that the great show had continued, and Prince Albert had much to do in reference to the commission, and in attending various meetings for the promotion of education and works of benevolence. All question of the enormous success of the Exhibition had been settled almost in the first week. There was a money surplus amounting to about a quarter of a million after paying expenses. There had frequently been above 70,000 persons in the building at one time; on the last days there were over 100,000 each day. The receipts of the last week were £29,795; the total receipts, including everything, being £505,107, and the liabilities above £220,000.

A few days before the building was closed the Queen and

the Prince were on a visit to Liverpool and Manchester, to which there will be some reference in a succeeding page; but on the 15th of October the Exhibition was closed by Prince Albert, who addressed the jurors after receiving their report. The Queen had paid her last visit on the previous day. "It looked so beautiful I could not believe it was the last time I was to see it," she wrote; but there were already the sad signs of removal. The entry in the journal concludes: "It made us all very melancholy. . . . The old Cornish woman (Mary Kerlynack) who walked up several hundred miles to see the Exhibition was at the door to see me—a most hale old woman, who was near crying at my looking at her."

We have already noted the prompt and genuine interest expressed by the "Prince-president" Louis Napoleon Bonaparte in the success of the Great Exhibition, and in this he evidently represented the French people, who came to London in great numbers, and manifested not only a generous appreciation of the show to which their own artisans and manufacturers had so largely contributed, but a pleased and grateful sense of the good feeling and hospitable welcome which attended their stay in England. This feeling, and the *entente cordiale* which had been established between the two nations, was expressed by an invitation to the royal commissioners and the executive by one of the chief of the French exhibitors to visit Paris on the 2d of August, where some suitable festivities would be held in their honour, including a fête by the president of the republic at St. Cloud and a ball at the Hôtel de Ville. Louis Napoleon was anxious that Prince Albert, for whose character and ability he had great admiration, should accept the invitation conveyed to him through Lord Granville to be present at the fêtes, and to be a guest at the Palace of the Elysée; but the Prince felt compelled to decline the

honour, both on account of his health, which was already tried by the labours that had devolved on him, and because he had decided to attend no festive celebrations of the success of the Exhibition except that at the Guildhall. The fêtes at Paris were brilliant, and the hospitality accorded to the visitors at once cordial and superb, Lord Granville especially gaining the enthusiastic regard of the hosts by his happy and graceful speeches in response to the toasts that were drunk and the courtesies that were offered.

A year of great events was drawing to a close, when, on the 4th of December, her Majesty, who was at Osborne, received the startling intelligence that by a *coup d'état* two days previously the "prince-president" had abolished the constitution of the French Republic, that Paris was in a state of siege, that universal suffrage had been proclaimed with a view to elect a responsible head of the state for ten years, and a legislative body, and to concur in restoring the system created by the first consul (afterwards Emperor Napoleon) at the commencement of the century. There had been an energetic attempt on the part of the republican deputies to resist this sudden and secret stroke, but the deputies were arrested, the rising of the populace was not only suppressed, but was anticipated by the troops, who were ordered to fire upon the people in the boulevards on the first appearance of an opposing demonstration. Barricades arose, blood flowed; there was a conflict and great loss of life, for the military held the streets and swept them with a sustained fire, which was also directed against houses where any armed resistance was suspected. Many people in England recoiled with horror from the course taken by the president; many others believed that he had done the best thing possible for saving Paris and France from another revolution succeeded by a state of anarchy and the excesses of violent and

lawless pretenders to authority. Among those who took this view was Lord Palmerston, and it was at such a crisis as this that his habit of what seemed like a reckless committal of the foreign policy of the country to an expression of his personal opinion would be most mischievous. At all events the Queen seemed to think so, for she immediately wrote to Lord John Russell that she thought it of great importance that Lord Normanby, our ambassador at Paris, should be instructed to remain entirely passive, and should take no part whatever in what was passing, as any word from him might be misconstrued at such a moment. This opinion was in concurrence with that of the cabinet, and instructions were sent which enabled Lord Normanby to tell the French minister for foreign affairs that he need make no change in his relations to the French government; but Lord Palmerston could not resist an opportunity for sending messages of his own, and it transpired that without consulting anybody he had expressed not only to our ambassador in Paris, but to the French ambassador here, his approbation of the *coup d'état*. This repetition of a course of procedure which was amenable neither to precedent nor to rebuke, placed the premier and the cabinet in a position which necessitated the removal of Lord Palmerston from the foreign office, where he was succeeded by Lord Granville.

Who could have foreseen—and yet there may have been a few people who could foresee—that the swift current of events would very shortly make Louis Napoleon Bonaparte emperor of the French and the ally of England,—would bring him here as an imperial visitor and take the Queen to France as his honoured guest,—that Lord Palmerston would succeed Lord Aberdeen as premier, after the latter had, by aid of a coalition ministry of Whigs and Peelites, failed to satisfy the country during the pro-

secution of a war with Russia—a tremendous struggle such as the present century had never witnessed?

It has been remarked that before the close of the year 1852 two events had happened which, though they had no actual relation to each other, came so close together that the coincidence was noticeable. On the 13th of September the Duke of Wellington died at Walmer Castle after a short and comparatively painless illness. On Sunday the 5th of December, the anniversary of the *coup d'état*, the empire was restored in France, and Louis Napoleon, who had made a progress through the provinces, became the Emperor Napoleon the Third by the suffrages of the people and the army.

The Queen and the royal family were at Balmoral when, on the 16th of September, her Majesty with the Prince and some of the Highland party had gone on an excursion to Alt-na-Giuthasach, to a little "shiel" where they were to spend a couple of days. While stopping to rest at one point of the journey the Queen suddenly missed her watch, which had been a present from "the dear old duke," and not being certain whether she had put it on or not, sent one of the Highland servants back to inquire. The man returned by the time that the party had reached the Dhu Loch, and reported that the watch was safe, at the same time handing some letters which he had brought back. Amongst them was one from Lord Derby, which contained sad news indeed. "England's, or rather Britain's pride, her glory, her hero, the greatest man she ever had produced, was no more! Sad day! Great and irreparable national loss!" So wrote the Queen in the depth of her sorrow; and she continued: "The day must have come: the duke was eighty-three; . . . but what a loss! One cannot think of this country without the duke, our immortal hero! In him was centred almost every

earthly honour a subject could possess. His position was the highest a subject ever had—above party—looked up to by all—revered by the whole nation,—the friend of the Sovereign; and how simply he carried these honours! With what singleness of purpose, what straightforwardness, what courage, were all the motives of his actions guided! . . . His experience and his knowledge of the past were so great, too! he was a link which connected us with bygone times—with the last century. Not an eye will be dry in the whole country." In her simple impulsive way the Queen had written in her journal in the evening the thoughts that immediately followed the reading of the sorrowful intelligence, and they expressed the national feeling.

Never had such a spectacle been seen as that of the vast multitude which, on the 18th of November, occupied the streets and stood in profound silence as the grand and solemn funeral procession of the great commander passed by the route from the Horse Guards to Saint Paul's Cathedral, where the tomb was prepared beside the last resting-place of Nelson. The body of the duke had lain in state at Chelsea Hospital for three days, and enormous numbers of people had been admitted—as many as 100,000 in one day—several being seriously injured on the first occasion from want of arrangements for restraining the tremendous crush. The vast funeral pageant was very imposing as minute guns were fired, the drums beat in a long and heavy roll, increasing like the roll of thunder, and the bands played the dead march; while dignitaries of every degree, military officers, foreign diplomatists, troops, pensioners, and officers bearing superb insignia, slowly passed along. Prince Albert, with the lord-chamberlain and groom of the stole, attended in a state carriage drawn by six horses. The carriages of the Queen and the great nobility followed the funeral-car, and her Majesty witnessed

the funeral procession from Buckingham Palace as it passed the Horse Guards, and again from St. James's Palace as it came down into Pall Mall. Foreign officers of high rank carried the field-marshal's batons that had been presented to the duke by other powers. The English baton was borne on a cushion by the dead warrior's old comrade the Marquis of Anglesey. Foreign visitors were impressed more by the silence and solemnity of the assembled millions than by the procession itself. There were representatives of every high-class state present, except Austria, where the government was supposed to have taken offence at Lord Palmerston's reply to a remonstrance against the very rough reception and insulting remarks inflicted by some draymen on General Haynau on his visit to Barclay and Perkins' brewery while he was in London. General Haynau had the reputation of being a cruel and remorseless military tyrant, and it was declared that he had not only persecuted the Poles but had ordered Polish ladies to be flogged. At the funeral of the hero of Waterloo France was represented by its ambassador, by the special command of the prince president, so soon to become emperor.

"Honour, my lords, to the people who so well knew how to reverence the illustrious dead," said Lord Derby in a fine oration in the House of Peers that night. "Honour to the friendly visitors, especially to France, the great and friendly nation that testified by the presence of their representative, their regret and veneration for his memory. . . . We have buried, in our greatest hero, the man among us who had the greatest horror of war."

"His object was not fame, nor glory, but a lasting peace," the Earl of Derby had said in his oration on the Duke of Wellington. "L'Empire c'est la paix," had been the emphatic declaration of Napoleon the Third amidst the splendours which cele-

brated his return to Paris, and his reception of the imperial title. The object of the Great International Exhibition had been the promotion of peace, and yet the mourning for the duke was scarcely over—the watchword that caught the ear of France had scarcely found its way into historical record—the latest sounds of the removal of the Great Palace of Peace from Hyde Park had scarcely ceased—before there was proclamation of a mighty war, and stirring sounds of military preparations were heard in every part of the country. Lord Hardinge succeeded the Duke of Wellington as commander-in-chief, for Prince Albert had definitely declined the honour when it was offered him in prospect, and had felt obliged to combat the arguments by which the duke himself endeavoured to induce him to reconsider his determination. He had, however, taken great practical and personal interest in the question of organizing the militia, reconstructing the plan of military instruction by establishing a large camp where effective contingents might be kept in training, and forming an army reserve force. His consultations with the duke and others had been of considerable value and importance, resulting in the formation of the camps at Chobham and Aldershott.

On the 7th of April, 1853, another prince was born at Buckingham Palace, and the Queen made a rapid recovery; so rapid that on the 18th she wrote to her uncle, who, in company of the faithful Stockmar, was bearing his latest grief at Brussels: "Leopold is to be the name of our fourth young gentleman. It is a mark of love and affection which I hope you will not disapprove. It is a name which is the dearest to me after Albert's, and one which recalls the almost only happy days of my sad childhood. To hear Prince Leopold again will make me think of all those days! His other names will be George Duncan Albert, and the sponsors the King of Hanover, Ernest Hohenlohe, the

Princess of Prussia, and Mary Cambridge. George is after the King of Hanover, and Duncan, a compliment to dear Scotland." The King George of Hanover mentioned here was the Queen's cousin. Her uncle, Ernest Augustus, had died in his eighty-first year on the 18th of November, 1851.

It was not till the 28th of June that the infant prince was baptized in presence of all the sponsors mentioned, and before that time (on the 21st) the Queen with the King of Hanover, and the Duke of Coburg, was present at a first trial of field operations at Chobham, where a large number of troops had taken up their quarters after the preparation of the ground as a camp, Prince Albert and the Duke of Cambridge having gone down to inspect the arrangements. The Queen on horseback, and wearing a military riding-habit, rode with Prince Albert and her royal guests down the lines, and afterwards witnessed the manœuvres from one of the heights. It was computed that a hundred thousand spectators were present, and the "sham fight" was pronounced to be as much like "the real thing" as possible, the broken country, streams, hills, and woods giving it additional interest and variety.

Prince Albert afterwards took an active part in the military duties of the camp; but on his return to town on the 25th he suffered severely from a cold, and afterwards from an attack of measles, with which the Prince of Wales had sickened some days before. All the family suffered from this disorder, and the young Crown Prince of Hanover, and the Duke and Duchess of Coburg, also took it, and, leaving before they were aware of the infection, transmitted it to the young Belgian princes, the Duke of Brabant and the Count of Flanders, whom they met on their way back to Coburg.

Her Majesty and the Prince again visited the camp in

August, along with the four eldest children, when some very effective and brilliant manœuvres were performed previous to its breaking up on the 20th. On the 11th of August a grander and more imposing spectacle took place. Forty ships of war of all kinds, of which thirty-seven were steam-vessels, had assembled at Spithead and were reviewed by her Majesty, who, with the Prince and several distinguished guests, grand-duchesses and duchesses, the Crown Prince of Wurtemberg, the Duke of Mecklenburg, and the Prince of Prussia, witnessed the evolutions. It was a superb spectacle as the *Victoria and Albert* led the way between, and slightly in advance of, the two divisions of the fleet—a fleet which carried 1100 guns and 10,000 men, and was in advance of that of any other European power; the great development having been signalized by the building of the *Duke of Wellington*, a screw steam-vessel with 131 guns, and capable of being propelled at the rate of eleven miles an hour against wind and tide.

Even at that time war with Russia was regarded as almost inevitable. Lord Aberdeen, with all his desire to preserve peace, and his supposed amicable relations with the czar, began to fear that he could not resist hostilities. Nor were hostilities resisted. In the early spring of the following year the monstrous demands of the Emperor Nicholas, and his arrogant assumptions that he could obliterate Turkey at his will, consolidated our alliance with the French, and war with Russia was proclaimed on the 31st of March, 1854.

Napoleon III. was a firm and faithful ally, and his conduct throughout the continuance of the tremendous struggle with Russia was marked by an honourable desire to maintain the closest and most friendly relations with this country. He, like Louis Philippe, was only distantly acknowledged by the sov-

ereigns of Europe, and though all but the Emperor Nicholas, who could not get farther than "mon cousin," addressed him in the usual brotherly style, he felt that he was treated as a parvenu, and he accepted the situation with quiet dignity. It is not to be wondered at that the frank and kindly responses to his communications made by her Majesty and Prince Albert gave him unaffected satisfaction, and when, in July, 1854, the Prince promptly accepted his invitation to visit the camp between St. Omer and Boulogne, where he had collected an army of 100,000 men, he expressed his pleasure in terms of courtesy which were undoubtedly sincere. The invitation was conveyed with much delicacy; the emperor first inquiring of Lord Cowley, then our representative in Paris, whether (as a friend) he thought it would be acceptable. The visit was paid on the 4th of September. The King of the Belgians had been with the emperor, but could not stay, and though Prince Albert could only remain three days, which were actively occupied from morning till night, he had, during rides and walks, many opportunities of confidential conversation with the emperor, with whom he was for the most part greatly pleased, though he noticed about him somewhat of a garrison tone, which was probably, to a great extent, attributable to the occasion. Of Prince Albert the emperor had formed a very high opinion, and evidently felt deeply the unreserved manner in which he talked of public affairs, and the gracious messages of which he was the bearer from the Queen, who had sent a friendly letter to the empress. This touched Louis Napoleon deeply, for while some of the "crowned heads" were probably wondering whither he would eventually endeavour to look for an alliance, he had, in 1853, quietly married, "for love," the beautiful and distinguished Eugenie Marie de Montijo, daughter of Count de Montijo,

a grandee of Spain, and of Mary Manuelo Kirkpatric de Closeburn, the descendant of a Scottish Roman Catholic family. This accomplished lady, who was twenty-seven years old at the time of her marriage with the emperor, had completed her education in France and England, and had travelled over the greater part of Europe.

The spontaneous greeting sent by the Queen was greatly appreciated by the emperor, not only because of the unconventional and simple courtesy directed to the woman whom he loved, but because it opened the way to confirm the national alliance by personal ties of good-will. This sentiment was still further promoted when Prince Albert expressed her Majesty's desire to see the emperor and empress in England. Though difficult and absorbing duties in relation to the war and the sufferings of the soldiers in the Crimea occupied the constant attention both of the Queen and the Prince, the visit was paid at rather short notice on the 16th of April in the following year (1855). The imperial guests came in their yacht with an attendant squadron, and a fleet of our own war steamers were at Dover, off the port, to give a royal welcome; but there was such a dense fog that no fleet was visible, two of the French squadron ran aground near the South Foreland, and the imperial yacht with difficulty reached the admiralty pier. The welcome on the landing of the guests, and their subsequent journey, especially in London on the way from Southwark to the Paddington Station, was hearty and enthusiastic; and as the emperor passed to Piccadilly and Hyde Park, along the familiar streets occupied by cheering crowds, he must have experienced some strange emotion. Windsor was decorated with flags and triumphal arches for a grand reception. The open carriage conveying the imperial visitors and Prince Albert, who

had accompanied them from Dover, drove from the station to the castle, where her Majesty, with her children and the Prince of Leiningen and the Duke of Cambridge (who had recently returned from the seat of war), were waiting to receive them. The evening was fine and bright, and the Queen noticed a movement in the crowd of spectators outside, a groom was seen galloping his horse, a gun was fired, another groom appeared, and then, amidst the sound of cheering, came the escort and the outriders, as her Majesty stepped forward, with the children and the two princes close behind her, to receive her guests. The Queen speaks of the indescribable emotions which made this reception seem like a wonderful dream. She advanced and embraced the emperor, who, having kissed her hand, received a salute on either cheek, and her Majesty then embraced "the very gentle, graceful, and evidently very nervous empress, the princes were presented, and our children (Vicky with very alarmed eyes making very low curtsies). The emperor embraced Bertie, and then we went upstairs, Albert leading the empress, who, in the most engaging manner, refused to go first, but at length with graceful reluctance did so, the emperor leading me, expressing his great gratification at being here and seeing me, and admiring Windsor." In the throne-room there were other presentations, and the visitors were then conducted to their apartments,—the splendid suite including the Rubens, the Zuccarelli, and the Vandyke rooms,—the emperor's bed-room being the same that had been occupied by the Emperor Nicholas and by King Louis Philippe. Only three days before, the aged ex-Queen of France, the widowed Marie Amélie, had visited her Majesty, who says, "It made us both so sad to see her drive away in a plain coach with miserable post-horses, and to think that this was the Queen of the French, and that six years ago her

husband was surrounded by the same pomp and grandeur which three days hence would surround his successor."

The manners of the emperor were easy and propitiatory, his tone towards the Queen marked by a careful deference which was evidently sincere. His voice was low and soft, though he spoke with an earnestness which frequently became intense; his courtesy and tact were such as to conduce to the friendliest sentiments, and for the empress her Majesty quickly acquired genuine admiration and regard. "She is full of courage and spirit and yet so gentle, with such innocence and *enjouement*, that the *ensemble* is most charming. With all her great liveliness, she has the prettiest and most modest manner."

Much had to be done to make the brief visit memorable. The household troops were reviewed in the home park, where, the Queen says, the emperor rode down the line on a very fiery, beautiful chestnut, and rode extremely well. Lord Cardigan was there on the chestnut horse he rode at Balaklava. The excitement and cheering were tremendous; and the Queen was rather nervous because of the way in which the crowd on foot and horseback squeezed round the emperor; but all ended well.

There was, of course, much serious conference on the subject of the war during the stay of the imperial guests, and on the evening before their departure a council was held at Buckingham Palace, at which was present the Queen, the Emperor, Prince Albert, Marshal Vaillant, and Lords Palmerston, Clarendon, and Panmure. The purpose of the meeting was to settle the future plan of operations in the Crimea. Her Majesty records "it was one of the most interesting scenes I was ever present at. I would not have missed it for the world."

The festivities had included a ball in the Waterloo Room, where the Queen appeared in a quadrille with the Emperor, who,

she thought, danced with spirit and dignity. "How strange," she writes, "to think that I, the granddaughter of George the Third, should dance with the Emperor Napoleon, nephew of England's great enemy, now my nearest and most intimate ally, in the *Waterloo Room*, and this ally only six years ago living in this country an exile, poor and unthought of."

The important public events connected with the emperor's visit were his reception of an address from the corporation of London at Windsor Castle, and his subsequent state visit with the empress to the Guildhall from Buckingham Palace; the presence of the royal and imperial party at Her Majesty's Theatre to hear the opera of *Fidelio*, when the Queen led the emperor to the front of the royal box to present him to the applause of the audience; and the visit to the Crystal Palace,—the reconstructed palace of glass at Sydenham,—where the reception by a great assembled multitude was almost overwhelming, though the Queen states that she was anxious, and felt as she walked, leaning on the emperor's arm, that she was possibly a protection to him.

The emperor was invested with the order of the Garter in the throne-room at Windsor on the day after his arrival, and on that occasion there was a very full chapter, and the Queen was most anxious that everything should go off well. She even confided her anxiety to Bishop Wilberforce, who was present, and that keen observer and humorist has left a record of his impressions of the emperor's manner and appearance, saying that he was "rather mean-looking, small, and a tendency to *embonpoint;* a remarkable way, as it were, of swimming up a room, with an uncertain gait, a small gray eye, looking cunning, but with an aspect of softness about it too. The empress a peculiar face from the arched eyebrows; blonde complexion; an air of sadness

about her; but a person whose countenance at once interests you."

The visit resulted in the establishment of mutual confidence and in a very sincere regard, especially between her Majesty and the Empress Eugenie. Farewells were said with expressions of regret at parting, and almost the last words were a promise on the part of the Queen and the Prince that they would make a return visit to Paris in the summer if public duties did not prevent them. The return visit could not be made till after the prorogation of parliament on the 14th of August, and it was even then felt to be necessary that the stay in Paris should be short, for the Queen's health required the change and rest which could only be found at Balmoral.

The progress of the war in the Crimea had still left Sebastopol to be taken, although the Russians were evidently becoming exhausted in their efforts to subdue the allied armies by force of numbers.

The Emperor of Russia was dead; had died on the 2d March of the effects of a cold contracted in the severe winter, during which our perishing troops suffered so terribly in the freezing wind, snow, and rain of the Crimea. He had said that Generals January and February would subdue the allies, but it was he who, under his reverses and the icy climate of St. Petersburg, had ceased to trouble the world. Lord Raglan, our general in command, was dead; had died on the 29th of June; and was succeeded by General Simpson. There had been failures in some of our attempts; but the battles of Alma, Balaklava, and Inkermann had been fought and won. The allied armies had held their own, and on the 16th of August there was a great defeat of the reserve Russian host which was brought against the allied forces on the Tschernaya, where the French

bore the first brunt of the onslaught, and repelled it with splendid vigour and courage.

The time was so far propitious for the royal visit to Paris, for the spirits of the French were aroused by this event, and they were again enthusiastic for the alliance with England and the prosecution of the war to the taking of Sebastopol.

The welcome given to the Queen was imperial, but yet was remarkable for a friendly simplicity of manner on the part of the hosts. Doubtless the visit of her Majesty to France as a proof of an acknowledged alliance was as important to Napoleon III. as the former visit had been to Louis Philippe. From the moment when the Queen and Prince Albert, with the Prince of Wales and the Princess Royal, were received at Boulogne by the emperor and his brilliant retinue, there was a series of brilliant fêtes, alternating with pleasant hours of repose at the beautiful palace of St. Cloud, where a sumptuously furnished suite of rooms was placed at the disposal of the royal guests, who were received at the doors by the empress, the Princess Mathilde, and the ladies, and conducted up the fine staircase, lined with the Cent Gardes, to the rooms, which the Queen says were charming. "I felt quite bewildered, but enchanted; everything was so beautiful." The welcome to Paris had been truly magnificent, for the party arrived just at dusk, but not too late to see the superb decorations, the fine streets lined with troops, the splendid illuminations, and the enthusiastic crowds shouting, Vive la Reine d'Angleterre! as the bands played "God save the Queen." The new Boulevard dé Strasbourg, Porte St. Denis, the Madeleine, the Place de la Concorde, the Arc de Triomphe, were successive points where the grand spectacle was most imposing; and the Queen was much struck by the extent and brilliancy of the display of troops all the way

to the Bridge of Boulogne, near the village and palace of St. Cloud, where, to her great delight, she first saw the Zouaves, "splendid troops in splendid dress, the friends of my dear Guards." There could have been no more delightful royal abode than the palace of St. Cloud, with its charming gardens and park. The day after her Majesty's arrival was Sunday the 19th of August, when the English service was read in one of the rooms of the palace by the chaplain of the embassy, and the afternoon was spent with the imperial host and hostess in a quiet drive in the Bois de Boulogne to Neuilly and the banks of the Seine. There was a large dinner party in the evening, at which General Canrobert was present. He afterwards told Lord Clarendon that he had talked to many people, military and civil, but to none so thoroughly well-informed about the Crimea, the siege, and the armies, as her Majesty.

The Salle de Mars, the Salle de Diane, where the grand dinners and the reception after a dramatic performance were held, are as historical as the garden and the fountains, but the whole of the beautiful building and its surroundings are now little more than historical, for they were demolished during the iniquitous excesses of the Communists at a later date. The delightful air, the brightness of the pleasant gardens, the fine view of Paris from the windows of the royal apartments, were appreciated by her Majesty no less than the frank and pleasant ways of the emperor and his lovely Eugénie. A morning was occupied in a delightful drive to Versailles to see its wonderful gardens and series of fountains, the Grand Trianon and the Petit Trianon, where there was luncheon in one of the little cottages, and a pleasant hour was spent in listening under the trees to the band of the Guides. That night there was a state visit to the Grand Opera. Paris was illuminated; the streets were

thronged with people cheering; the theatre was crowded, and the performance ended with a ballet, concluding with a scene depicting Windsor at the time of the arrival of the emperor. The English national anthem was splendidly sung and enthusiastically received by the audience, and we learn that though the return to St. Cloud was not till after midnight, the Emperor and Prince Albert were in such good spirits that they sat up repeating old German songs to each other.

There was an admirable Exposition des Beaux Arts in Paris, at which England and the colonies were very well represented, and where the collection of painting and sculpture, as well as those of art manufactures, were very attractive. On the occasion of the royal visit the Emperor presented to Prince Albert a fine Sèvres vase representing the Exhibition of 1851, which had been expressly prepared for him. The same day there was a visit to the Tuileries, where the Queen received the préfet and municipality of Paris, accepting their invitation to a grand state ball at the Hôtel de Ville, and, with the permission of the emperor, consenting to receive the compliment of having the new street named after her. The royal party then went to the Elysée, whence, much to the Emperor's amusement, the Queen and Prince Albert, with the princess royal and the maid of honour, drove *incognito*, and in very plain attire, through several parts of Paris. They occupied a plain hired coach, and were greatly interested in the excursion.

On the following evening her Majesty was present at the great ball at the Hôtel de Ville. The streets were again illuminated; the reception was magnificent. Her Majesty wore a diadem containing the Koh-i-noor: that diamond which had been one of the great attractions of the Great Exhibition, had belonged to Runjeet Singh, chief of Lahore, and had been



presented to the Queen by the East India Company. On the 24th there was a splendid review of 30,000 to 40,000 troops in the Champs de Mars, where the troops cheered enthusiastically and the bands played "God save the Queen." This spectacle, the subsequent march past, and the aspect of the streets as the Emperor, Prince Albert, Prince Adalbert, and Prince Napoleon, in uniform, and attended by a brilliant suite, escorted the royal and imperial carriage, were striking features of the visit, and were memorable because, as the Queen remarked, "those splendid troops are the comrades of the men who are fighting along with mine, and I have a real affection for them;" to which the emperor replied that he hoped that happy unity might ever continue, and that her Majesty would be able to look at those soldiers as if they were her own."

Still more memorable, perhaps, was the visit that evening to the Hôtel des Invalides, under the dome of which lay the coffin containing the remains of the first Napoleon. The weather during the whole time of the visit to Paris had been exceedingly sultry, and the review had been deferred to the evening in consequence, so that it was late and growing dark when the Invalides was reached, and torches had to be lighted to conduct the visitors to the open vault in the great lofty church. The coffin was not yet in the vault, but in the small chapel at St. Jerome, to which the Emperor led her Majesty, who writes: "There I stood at the arm of Napoleon III., his nephew, before the coffin of England's bitterest foe; I, the granddaughter of that king who hated him most, and who most vigorously opposed him, and this very nephew who bears his name being my nearest and dearest ally! The organ of the church was playing 'God save the Queen' at the time, and this solemn scene took place by torchlight and during a thunder-storm."

The time was all too short for the magnificent series of festivities in honour of the royal visitors, and yet so admirably were they contrived that there were pleasant quiet hours for conversation—cosy little dinners preceding the evening assemblies, and many opportunities of discussing the progress of the war, which was of course the uppermost topic. On the 25th of August there was a visit to the forest of St. Germains, where the huntsmen with the dogs and horns assembled *en grand tenue*, and village girls all dressed in white, and presented by the curé, offered flowers and fruit to her Majesty, one of them declaiming a long poem, in which she broke down once or twice. In the evening there was a magnificent state ball and supper at Versailles surpassing in splendour anything that had been seen there since the days of Louis XIV.; supper for four hundred people being served on the stage in the theatre at small tables, each presided over by a lady of distinction, the royal and imperial supper party occupying the imperial box. This splendid assembly had been preceded by a grand display of fireworks and illuminations in the park, and all the arrangements had been designed by the empress, who, however, was at that time in delicate health and did not dance at the ball, where the Queen joined in three dances; and received several persons who were presented to her, among them Count Bismarck, then Prussian minister at Frankfort.

There existed between the emperor and his guests a frank confidence which enabled the Queen to tell him that she could not abate her friendship to the Orleans family or her demonstrations of personal regard to its members. The emperor entirely coincided with her, and declared that his own proceedings for excluding them from France and confiscating their property were caused only by his discovery that their agents, encouraged by themselves, were endeavouring to upset his authority. The Queen writes:

"The emperor said in conclusion of his explanation about the confiscation, that their agents were in constant communication with his enemies, even with those who preach assassination. I said I could hardly credit this. They were, I was sure, incapable of such conduct. I, however, added, that naturally all exiles were inclined to conspire, which he did not deny, and which, indeed, he had practised himself." This was plain, shrewd speaking; but the friendship which not only the Queen, but Prince Albert, felt towards the emperor and the empress, whom they both greatly admired, made such conversation easy. The Queen records that she felt confidence in the sincerity of the emperor, that she felt safe with him, and she could therefore speak without the restraint that accompanies suspicion or uncertainty.

Singularly enough, on returning from a visit to the Chapelle de St. Ferdinand on the following day (Sunday), a woman came from a house opposite, occupied by the curé, and brought a box containing two medals, which the emperor bought from her, and presented to the Queen *comme souvenir*. The medals bore the heads of the deceased Duke of Orleans, and of the Comte de Paris, with some lines in allusion to the latter being the hope of France. On the back was a representation of the chapel.

This Sunday was Prince Albert's birthday, and after the reading of the English service the generous hosts presented him with a fine picture by Meissonier—one of the best things in the Exhibition—and with a very beautifully-carved ivory cup; the Queen had made her presents in the morning, and after breakfast the emperor had caused a grand drum-roll—such as greets the new year—to be sounded by three hundred drums beneath the window

On the following morning adieux had to be said—and it was really a sad parting with the empress—to whose room the

Queen went to say good-bye. A beautiful fan, and a rose and a heliotrope from the garden, were Eugénie's latest gifts to the Queen, and to "Vicky" a beautiful bracelet, set with rubies and diamonds, and containing her hair. How significant—how full of painful regrets and memories—such gifts may become in after years!

At half-past ten the royal guests were on their way, accompanied by the emperor and empress, to the Tuileries, and passing amidst crowds of people under the Arc de Triomphe. There the final farewells were said to the empress, and the journey was continued to Boulogne, where the attendant royal squadron saluting at sea, and on shore the battalions of the French army filing past in honour of the Queen of England, some of their band playing "Rule Britannia" as they marched, had an indescribably grand effect. There was a visit to the camp in the evening, and the seaport town was all ablaze with illuminations and resonant with music. The Emperor conducted the Queen on board the royal yacht, in which he accompanied his guests some distance out to sea. Then with salutes of hand and cheek, and kindly words of parting, the emperor went down the side to his own barge, which conveyed him to his small yacht to return to Boulogne. "Adieu, madame! Au revoir! Je l'espère bien!" and so a remarkable visit of political no less than of personal interest came to an end.

The question that was being asked everywhere was, When will Sebastopol be taken? Through the long period of sufferings and privation borne by the allied troops in the Crimea—since that bleak morning in March of the previous year when the Guards filed before Buckingham Palace, where the Queen stood with beating heart and tearful eyes to watch them and to bid them farewell—there had been great and even heroic achieve-

ments, but appalling suffering and loss of life; and our men now stood, as it were, within reach of the Malakhoff and the Redan, whence, if once they could grasp them, they might seize or cripple the great stronghold.

There were then in the Crimea 100,000 French, 35,000 English, 12,000 Sardinians, and 54,000 Turks, and the war was rapidly drawing to a close. In the earlier days of the year after that terrible Crimean winter of 1854, when detachments of men, maimed, wounded, or wasted by sickness were sent home, the Queen and the Prince visited them in hospital, and strove to cheer and encourage them; and on the 18th of May, 1855, special Crimean medals were presented to those officers and soldiers who had been engaged at the Alma, Balaklava, and Inkerman. Upon a raised dais on the parade between the Horse Guards and St. James's Palace the Queen and the Prince took their places at ten o'clock on that spring morning. From an early hour every spot from which the ceremony could be witnessed had been occupied. It was a touching spectacle when, after the march past, the line formed three sides of a square facing the dais, and the names of officers and men entitled to the medal were called over by the adjutant-general, each man going forward to receive the medal which Lord Panmure, secretary at war, handed to her Majesty. The Duke of Cambridge, who had been hotly engaged at Inkerman, where his horse was shot under him, was among the recipients of this special token. Deeply affecting alike to Sovereign and subject was the sight of so many brave soldiers, many of them scarcely able to give the salute, and unable to move forward without assistance. The Queen wrote afterwards to her uncle, King Leopold, a letter which has often been quoted from Sir Theodore Martin's *Life of the Prince Consort*, where it appears. "From

the highest prince of the blood to the lowest private all received the same distinction for the bravest conduct in the severest actions, and the rough hand of the brave and honest private soldier came for the first time in contact with that of their Sovereign and their Queen. Noble fellows! I own I feel as if they were my own children. My heart beats for them as for my nearest and dearest! They were so touched, so pleased—many, I hear, cried; and they won't hear of giving up their medals to have their names engraved upon them, for fear that they should not receive the identical ones put into their hands by me!" Among the maimed was young Sir Thomas Trowbridge, who had lost one leg and the foot of the other at Inkerman, and continued to command his battery till the battle was over, his limbs being raised to prevent too great hæmorrhage. He was taken past in a bath-chair to receive his medal, and when the Queen told him she should make him one of her aides-de-camp, replied: " I am amply repaid for everything."

From the time that the troops were detained at Varna, where they died of cholera in such numbers that the beautiful valley where the British camp had been pitched was named by the Turks the "Valley of Death," down to the day when the treaty of peace was signed, her Majesty and the Prince Consort used unremitting exertions to ameliorate the condition of the brave fellows who were engaged in the long and arduous conflict against an enemy who did not regard the humanities which even in war are observed by civilized nations. The Queen expressed the indignation which was felt by her subjects when it became known that the Russians fired shot and shell upon the French and British fatigue parties engaged in burying the dead and succouring not only their own but the enemy's wounded. After the engagement at the Tchernaya, on the 16th of August, 1855,

while the Russians were retreating from the battle-field and the French were at work collecting the enemy's wounded on an open space to await the arrival of the ambulances, the Russians, who could see what was being done, opened fire upon them, without appearing to be concerned by the fact that they were also destroying their own helpless countrymen.

A military inquiry had then established the truth of previous barbarities, and the institution of which had been expedited by her Majesty's denunciations of the atrocities of the Muscovites. Writing to King Leopold the Queen said: "Many of our poor officers who were only slightly wounded were brutally butchered on the ground. Several lived long enough to say this. When poor General Sir G. Cathcart fell mortally wounded, his faithful and devoted military secretary (Colonel Charles Seymour), who had been with him at the Cape, sprang from his horse, and with one arm (he was wounded in the other) supported his dying chief, when three wretches came and bayoneted him." This was after the battle of Inkerman, which was fought and won by an inferior force of starving men—starving while the comforting food, drink, and clothing which should have reached them, with the huts that would have sheltered them from the piercing wind and bitter rain and snow, were delayed, landed in the wrong place, or somehow missing, because of the want of organization in the administration at home, and the adherence to a senseless routine which was altogether suited for preventing anything reaching the people for whom it was intended. This, and the wreck of vessels which brought the stores in a violent storm in the Black Sea, made a terrible episode in the struggle. While the troops were fighting, starving and only half-clad, the means of relief were on board vessels separated from the camp by an impassable sea of mud.

The Queen, her ladies, and the elder of the royal children set an example to the nation by working with their own hands to make articles of warm clothing, as well as by sending consignments of comforts for the men. Prince Albert, whose earnest representations and personal efforts resulted in the adoption of his plans for forming a reserve force at Malta, and for preparing a systematic method of despatching and consigning stores, sent warm coats, tobacco, and various comforts for officers and men of his brigade of the Guards, the two battalions of Rifles and the 11th Hussars. The *Times* sent out a commissioner, who admirably distributed medicines, food, and other necessary comforts purchased with contributions sent in to the office of the paper in response to an appeal, and amounting to £15,000, and afterwards increased to above £25,000.

On the 13th of October, 1854, a royal commission was issued for the establishment under the immediate direction of Prince Albert of a "Patriotic Fund" for the relief of the widows and orphans of soldiers, sailors, and marines who might fall in the war. Before the end of the year the contributions had amounted to half a million, and ultimately rose to above a million and a quarter, separate subscriptions being paid for sending additional chaplains to the seat of war. Bazaars, fancy fairs, and various concerts and entertainments were held for the purpose of raising funds, and the royal children exhibited some drawings—of course of a juvenile character—which sold for good prices.

Out of the very need and suffering of this war in the Crimea came many improvements of army administration, and much development of practical sympathy in various directions; but perhaps the most remarkable was that of the voluntary services of ladies who undertook the direction of a band of army nurses for the sick and wounded men in hospital at Scutari. Before

that time no such movement had been attempted, even if it had been thought of, and the innovation was doubtfully received, if not actually resented, by some in authority, and by members of the medical and surgical staff. The time soon came, however, when the names of Florence Nightingale and her devoted sisterhood were mentioned with reverence and deep regard, not only in the wards of the hospital, which they found in dire confusion and succeeded in bringing into order and comfort, but throughout the United Kingdom and on the continent of Europe.

Miss Florence Nightingale, who was the daughter of Mr. William Edward Nightingale of Lea Hurst in Derbyshire, was born in Florence in 1820, and was a lady of considerable attainments, especially in modern languages. From a comparatively early age she desired to devote her abilities to practical benevolent effort, and her gentle but strong and calm religious character led her to regard the charitable care of the sick as her peculiar mission. With the view of preparing herself for this arduous duty she became a visitor of workhouses, hospitals, and other institutions, where she had the opportunity of becoming acquainted with existing methods of dealing with the sick poor. She then entered as a voluntary nurse the Kaiserworth Hospital at Dusseldorf, and after inquiring into the systems adopted at various institutions in Germany, returned to London and founded a sanatorium for English invalid ladies in Upper Harley Street, where she became acquainted with Mrs. Sidney Herbert, the wife of the secretary at war. It was at his request that Miss Nightingale afterwards set out for the Crimea as superintendent of a staff of about forty voluntary and trained nurses, several of whom were ladies of rank and fortune. The work that this devoted band accomplished at Scutari, and the untiring energy and wise direction of the lady who instructed

and managed them, was soon known and appreciated. So rapidly did prejudices disappear that Miss Augusta Stanley, sister of Arthur Penrhyn Stanley, the late Dean of Westminster, took out another staff of forty lady nurses to meet the urgent needs of the great hospital at Scutari, and another which had been opened at Kululee. At that time there were four thousand patients in these two hospitals, and the work could only have been accomplished by the admirable tact and self-devotion of those who had undertaken it.

It need not be said that the Queen manifested deep appreciation of the work of these good women, and that she regarded Miss Nightingale as a personal friend; while for Miss Stanley her Majesty maintained a close and sincere affection for many years afterwards. Upon the return of Florence Nightingale to England in 1856, the national enthusiasm on her behalf demanding some honourable recognition, a testimonial fund was opened, and £50,000 was subscribed, which at her own request was devoted to the establishment of a nurses' training institution, which bore her name.

Sebastopol was taken on the 8th of September, and the news was sent by telegram to Balmoral, where the Queen and Prince Albert, with their children, had arrived on the previous day. The old house had been found quite insufficient for the accommodation of the royal family and the suite, and a new building had been so far completed that a suitable portion of it was not only ready for occupation, but the rooms, including the library and drawing-rooms, were beautifully furnished. Her Majesty was delighted with everything, and as the royal party entered the hall an old shoe was thrown after them "for good luck." Dinner was served, and telegraphic despatches came from Lord Clarendon, which the Queen was

reading when Lord Granville said, "I have still better news—from General Simpson—Sebastopol is in the hands of the allies."

On the top of a cairn the fagots and materials for a great bonfire had been prepared on a former occasion when a false report had been made of the fall of the Russian stronghold. "In a few minutes," says the Queen, "Albert and all the gentlemen, in every species of attire, sallied forth, followed by all the servants, and gradually by all the population of the village—keepers, gillies, workmen—up to the top of the cairn. We waited and saw them light the bonfire, accompanied by general cheering. It blazed forth brilliantly, and we could see the numerous figures surrounding it, some dancing, all shouting—Ross playing his pipes, and Grant and Macdonald firing off guns continually."

A telegram of congratulation was sent to the Emperor of the French, and there were universal expressions of gratification that the war was at an end. However glorious it may have been for the fame of the allied forces, it had cost so much in human life and human suffering, to say nothing of the vast sum which it added to the national expenditure, that everybody was heartily sick of it, and in France there had been a renewal of manifestations against the prolonged operations of the generals. The French loss was estimated at 63,500 men, the English at 24,000 (including 270 officers), and 2873 were disabled by wounds, or disease, of which so many of both French and English had died in consequence of the hardships and exposure. Above £40,000,000 was added to the national debt, and the result was that Russia had been crippled for a few years—till she could take advantage of a peace which left affairs comparatively little changed so far as the general "situation" was concerned—

and could set about furtively and quietly reinstating Sebastopol, as she has been doing quite recently.

The destruction of the fortifications and the final evacuation of the Crimea by the British forces did not take place till the 12th of July, 1856, and even then much remained to be done in the settlement of the treaties which were to secure peace and check the inordinate demands of Russia.

The last scene—the actual termination of the events directly associated with that great conflict—may be said to have been the first distribution of that much coveted distinction, the Victoria Cross, by her Majesty on the 26th of June, 1857. For a long time previously the necessity for providing a suitable decoration for distinguished heroism in the army and navy had been fully recognized, and the brave deeds of a number of men during the Crimean War had accentuated the desire to recognize their valour by some token which should confer upon them especial honour, and be bestowed by the Queen herself.

The warrant for instituting a decoration, to be called the Victoria Cross and to be inscribed "For Valour," had been made out in 1856, and it was understood that the distinction would be conferred on those men who had served in presence of the enemy and had performed some signal act of valour or devotion to their country.

When the list was made up it was found that sixty-two men were entitled to this honour, and it was announced that the decoration would take place in Hyde Park, where early in the morning of the day mentioned more than 100,000 people had assembled, without counting 12,000 who occupied an immense semicircle of raised seats. About 4000 troops kept the open space, and below them, over the royal pavilion, were drawn up the sixty-two men who were the heroes of the day.



Every heart beat high, as her Majesty appeared at about 10 o'clock riding into the park, mounted on a gray roan, which was her favourite horse. The Queen wore a scarlet jacket and black skirt, and as she rode forward, attended by Prince Albert, Prince Frederick William of Prussia, and a brilliant suite, the scene was truly magnificent. Her Majesty remained on horseback, and each of the men to be decorated was brought up to her to receive the decoration, which she fastened to his breast amidst the tumultuous cheering of the great assembly. As each man retired the Prince Consort saluted him by bowing to him with a gesture of marked respect. The ceremony was grandly significant, and the bronze Maltese cross, with the crown in its centre, surmounted by the lion, and with laurel branches on the clasp from which it depends, supported by the V, has ever since been, as it will surely remain, a priceless distinction, valued by everyone on whom it is conferred, irrespective of any rank save that of conspicuous or undoubted bravery.

The camp at Aldershot had been completed, and on the 18th of April, 1856, her Majesty visited it, and having alighted from her carriage, was seen to be prepared for riding along the lines, where 14,000 men were drawn up and presented a front extending for a mile and a half. The Queen rode a chestnut charger richly caparisoned, and to the music of many military bands the men presented arms. Her Majesty then rode to a hill at a little distance, and, surrounded by her staff, witnessed the march past. Remaining till next day in the royal pavilion which had been erected for the accommodation of her Majesty and the Prince, the Queen reappeared to be present at a grand field-day, when 18,000 troops were drawn up on the heights. She wore the uniform of a field-marshal, with the star and ribbon of the Garter, and a dark-blue riding skirt,

and after witnessing with the Prince a series of extensive manœuvres under the direction of General Knollys, returned to Buckingham Palace. A week afterwards there was a review of the great fleet at Spithead, where the number of ships amounted to 240, of which 24 were ships of the line. There were about 100,000 spectators at Portsmouth, and both on sea and shore crowds of spectators were present to witness the magnificent spectacle

At another review at Aldershot on the 8th of July, when the main body of troops had returned from the Crimea, her Majesty was attended by Prince Albert, the Prince of Wales, the King of the Belgians, the Comte de Flanders, the Duke of Cambridge, and Lord Panmure, all in uniform. The weather had been wet, but cleared up, so that the close carriage in which the Queen rode was opened that she might stand up in it and address the officers from the Crimea who had been under fire, and four men of each company and troop, who stood out from the Crimean regiments which had formed three sides of a square round the carriage. In her usual clear and musical tones the Queen said: "Officers, non-commissioned officers, and soldiers, I wish personally to convey through you to the regiments assembled here this day my hearty welcome on their return to England in health and full efficiency. Say to them that I have watched anxiously over the difficulties and hardships which they have so nobly borne, that I have mourned with deep sorrow for the brave men who have fallen in their country's cause, and that I have felt proud of that valour which, with their gallant allies, they have displayed on every field. I thank God that your dangers are over, while the glory of your deeds remains; but I know that should your services be again required, you will be animated with the same devotion which in the Crimea has rendered you invincible."

These few stirring words of confidence, of welcome home, of regret for the sufferings and losses of the army, and of gratitude that the war was at an end, evoked a great shout of "God save the Queen!" and cheers which rang echoing among the hills, and helmets, shakos, and bear-skins were thrown into the air, and waving sabres flashed and gleamed, a fitting prelude to the welcome which on the following day the Queen gave to the Guards returning from the Crimea, as they passed Buckingham Palace.

But there were joys and sorrows apart from these great public occasions—joys of the sweetest, sorrows of the bitterest. It was on the occasion of taking possession of the new house at Balmoral that the news came of the final scene of the gigantic struggle with Russia, and Balmoral had become the synonym for rest and simple family pleasures, undisturbed by cares of rank or state. The Duchess of Kent had so greatly benefited by the air of Deeside that her royal highness had for some time occupied the fine old white house at Abergeldie, so that with her son and daughter, the Prince of Leiningen and the Princess Hohenlohe, when they were her guests, she could often complete the happy family party at Balmoral.

But there were other visitors too, and now that the new castle was finished the number of them would be likely to increase. Of one of the first of them we hear in a letter from Prince Albert to Stockmar on the 13th of September, 1855, in which he says: "Prince Fritz William comes here to-morrow evening. I have received a very friendly letter from the Princess of Prussia." Yes, the youth who was soon to become crown-prince by the accession of his father, William, Prince of Prussia, to the throne of the childless king, had already fixed his affections on the princess royal, who, though yet a child, was remark-

able not only for varied accomplishments, but for the frank kindliness which united with a singular self-possession to give her the dignity which always belongs to true simplicity of nature.

There was no other obstacle than the youth of the princess to a betrothal to which the parents of both were favourable; and it was well known that Stockmar, who almost worshipped the princess royal, had long earnestly desired that such an alliance might arise from mutual regard. That had come to pass naturally enough, and when the young prince arrived at Balmoral and with the consent of his parents and of the King of Prussia made his proposal to the Queen and Prince Albert, there was little to be said except that as the princess was so young, and had not yet been confirmed, he must leave her free from any formal engagement till the spring of the following year, when he might fulfil his wish to make his offer to herself without the intervention of family formalities, and thereafter wait for the marriage till after the seventeenth birthday of his betrothed bride.

The conditions may have appeared to be somewhat hard; but as the young prince was there and his suit had been accepted, he was, so to speak, master of the situation, especially as it soon became apparent that the princess was quite aware of his regard, and was inclined to show that she was by no means indifferent to it. It was not very likely that hearts like those of the Queen and Prince Albert would be insensible to the probabilities of these young people having learned the usual language of mutual regard, and it was equally improbable that they would sternly repress any expression of it. At anyrate the Queen does not appear to have been much startled or displeased when a little more than a week afterwards she wrote in her journal: "Sept. 29th, 1855. Our dear Victoria was this day engaged to Prince

Frederick William of Prussia, who had been on a visit to us since the 14th. He had already spoken to us on the 20th of his wishes; but we were uncertain, on account of her extreme youth, whether he should speak to her himself, or wait till he came back again. However, we felt it was better he should do so; and during our ride up Craig-na-Ban this afternoon he picked a piece of white heather (the emblem of 'good luck'), which he gave to her; and this enabled him to make an allusion to his hopes and wishes as they rode down Glen Girnoch, which led to this happy conclusion."

On the 20th of March in the following year the ceremony of the confirmation of the princess took place in the private chapel at Windsor Castle by the Bishop of Oxford (Wilberforce) and the Archbishop of Canterbury. The princess was led in by her father, followed by the Queen and her godfather King Leopold, and beside the royal family the great officers of state and many distinguished personages were present.

The course of the true love of the youthful prince and his betrothed ran smooth, and the faithful lover was of course a frequent visitor to this country. A calamity which might have been most serious to both, occurred in June, while he was in London, but absent from the palace. The princess was sealing a letter at a table when her sleeve caught fire at the candle and she was in the midst of flame. Happily Miss Hildyard, the governess of the children, and Mrs. Anderson were in the room, and succeeded in enveloping the princess in the hearth-rug and so extinguishing the flames. Her arm was badly burned, but she exhibited the most perfect self-possession, asking those present to send for her father, lest the Queen should first hear of the accident and be alarmed by it.

The year closed with a great sorrow in the midst of great

mercies and anticipations of happiness. The Prince of Leiningen, her Majesty's half-brother, had for some time late in the year 1856 been suffering from a stroke of paralysis; on the 13th of November he lay dead, having in his later days been attended and consoled by the love and devotion of his sister the Princess Hohenlohe. The grief of the Queen was poignant, for she truly loved her brother and sister. They had all three, she said to her uncle, known but one parent, their mother, and as the Queen grew up the difference of age that had been between them entirely vanished.

On the 14th of April, 1857, only a few weeks before what may be called the final spectacle associated with the war—the presentation of the Victoria Cross—another princess had been born at Buckingham Palace; and the Queen wrote to King Leopold that she was to be named Beatrice, a fine old name borne by three of the Plantagenet princesses, Mary, after the Princess Mary of Cambridge, "Victoria (after Mama and Vicky, who with Fritz Wilhelm are to be the sponsors), and Feodore" (the Queen's sister). With this reference we pass to another chapter of social and domestic royal life.

END OF VOL. II.